Sixty Seconds Run

A Life In Business, Politics And Public Service

J.W. Bud Bird

The title and much of the inspiration for this book have been respectfully borrowed from the last verse of Rudyard Kipling's famous poem, "IF—".

The text for this book has been edited by Philip Lee, Professor of Journalism at St. Thomas University in Fredericton.

The Foreword has been written by Roy MacGregor, Author and Journalist of Ottawa.

The original draft was reviewed by Arthur Doyle of Fredericton.

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This book is dedicated to all the people who have given me their encouragement and assistance throughout the many fulfilling years of my lifetime.

To family, friends, employees, customers, suppliers, constituents, colleagues, advisors and associates, I hope this story helps to express my genuine appreciation for your support.

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Foreword

by

Roy MacGregor

Only in Canada could a politician be ruled out of order for askin if there is any hope.

But such was the fate of Bud Bird back in the late winter of 199 when the Spicer Commission – officially known as The Citizens' Forun on Canada's Future – was hauled before a Parliamentary committee t explain itself and its reportedly soaring expenses.

I was then with the *Ottawa Citizen* and had, originally as joke, started calling myself "Commissioner 13" – the Spice Commission had 12 commissioners – and my daily reports ha become a bit of a popular curiosity in what was then known as th Southam chain of newspapers. All I did was pretend I was on th inside and, before I knew it, I *was* on the inside, recipient of mor sneak faxes and brown envelopes than I have heard or seen in all th years since of column writing. Not a day went by without som outrageous, funny or profoundly moving story from the Spice

Commission's expensive trek across the land to find out what Canadians were thinking.

This was in the months after the failure of the Meech Lake Accord, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's ambitious plan to include, finally, the reluctant and recalcitrant province of Quebec in the Canadian Constitution which Quebeckers had not been party to a decade earlier.

While the ambition was fine – *who could possibly argue against inclusion?* – the process had been most upsetting to a great many Canadians, myself included. As one who had covered every moment of the Accord right from its birth in an old lumber baron's summer place high in the Gatineau Hills, I had seen how non-inclusive the deal truly was. There was not a word for aboriginals, for one thing. But the process itself had been deeply insulting: middle-aged men in suits decreeing that they, and only they, were capable of discussing and deciding the future of the country. The final arrangements had been hammered out in the old Ottawa railway station under duress and even bullying – one key factor in the final signing widely rumoured to be the desperate need of several premiers to get to a washroom. The final document was declared untouchable, to hold no "egregious" error – whatever that meant? – and once the Prime Minister bragged about how he had strategically "rolled the dice" on his country, there was no end to the public outrage. When Manitoba and Newfoundland failed to vote on the Accord by the deadline, it died. The Spicer Commission was to find out what the people were now thinking and report back.

It was, for most of us covering the Hill in those days, the darkest hours of modern Canadian history. Separatist forces were rising again in Quebec; increased attention was being given to a new political reform movement in the West; the prime minister himself had become a "lightning rod" for national outrage. Veteran political journalists the likes of Bruce Hutchison had become convinced that the country could not possibly survive the crisis.

And so, in this charged atmosphere, Spicer was ordered to appear before a Parliamentary committee and explain his expenses.

They talked and debated, accused and explained for more than an hour before Bird, then a Progressive Conservative backbencher from Fredericton, was allowed to ask the only question that was truly on the mind of every Canadian paying even the slightest attention to national politics.

"Is there any hope?"

He never received an answer. The chair ruled him out of order, in that the only questions permissible this day would be on administration.

No wonder that, today, Bud Bird refers to his time in Ottawa, 1988-1993, as "the five lost years."

He should have been in cabinet, but when he arrived in Ottawa there were already two New Brunswickers in cabinet. When he, like every other PC but two, lost in the 1993 election, it was far more a grateful release to him than defeat. He was able to return to the city of his life achievements – and happily pick up where he had left off: Living a life most worthy of living, most deserving of celebration.

I cannot claim to have much in common with Bud Bird apart from the fact that we both failed high school chemistry, both played tuba in a marching band and both are ridiculously in love with fishing.

I met him first on his request, a phone call asking if I might do him the courtesy of sitting down with him over coffee and explaining to him my vision of the country and my thoughts on the current government and, in particular, the prime minister. I doubt I convinced him of anything. I can assure you, however, that he convinced me of a great deal.

Contrary to many of my Parliament Hill colleagues, I have never believed that politicians arrive in office with anything but the best intentions. They may be naive, they may even at times be foolish, but they do wish to do well, to serve faithfully and to leave their city/province/country better than they found it. Some get lost along the way; some do not. Bud Bird may say he "lost" five years but he himself has never been lost when it comes to giving more back than he has taken.

Bud's story is a great read. I had always thought he was an engineer or had an MBA – stunned to learn he never went on to post-secondary education but, instead, went to "Drill University," the RCMP. From there he went into business, eventually his own business, and from there launched a series of successful political careers that included Mayor of Fredericton, a member of the New Brunswick Legislature and, of course, the House of Commons.

His is a tale of great success and tragic heartbreak – the early death of son Stephen and Bud's tortured efforts to come to terms with it. It is an account of great business success, setbacks, recoveries and his own great optimism. He is honest about his shortcomings, humble about his successes.

While it might be argued that his greatest triumphs came in business, to me his greater contributions lie in the political field. As mayor he was crucial in getting his city to come to terms with the bilingual reality of the province of New Brunswick. As Minister of Natural Resources in the New Brunswick government, he fought for salmon preservation and more enlightened forestry practices – and was so successful that, for a time, he believed he might succeed Richard Hatfield as premier. Were it not for a business crisis that required his leaving provincial politics, it might well have happened.

But perhaps his greatest legacy is that he never lost sight of his original reasons for entering politics: to serve, to make a better city, better province, better country. He asked if there was hope because he himself never lost hope, no matter how hopeless it might have seemed at times to others.

And he learned from his own mistakes. When he was called out by *The Daily Gleaner* for holding closed-door sessions on sensitive matters – "secret meetings," the paper called them – he re-thought his reasons and came to the conclusion that the paper was right and he was wrong, that transparency has a value that cannot be measured in either dollars or votes.

"My advice to any aspiring politician," he writes here, "would b to practice your political affairs as though your actions were going to b reported on page one tomorrow, as they very well could be. That does no mean that you need to curry the favour of the press, because they wi recognize that and disrespect you for it, but rather be prepared to te them honestly what is going on, or if you are dealing with a confidentia issue tell them so and tell them why. That is the surprising element of a this: the media will generally respect a confidence from someone the trust, but they will fight vigorously against any policy or practice that i based on a general principle of privacy."

And that, really, is the essence of what Bud Bird stands for afte such a long life of public service:

Respect.

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An author of more than two dozen books, Roy MacGregor is renowne for his ability to capture the Canadian identity through such publicatio as his long running column This Country in the Globe and Mail. He w appointed an Officer in the Order of Canada in 2005 as "one of o country's most gifted storytellers".

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Preface

Reflections On A Full Life

In my youth, life did not seem to have any grand sense of purpose or urgency, except to exist and enjoy. In my early working years, however, as I began to yearn for the opportunity to have my own business and the days and years began to pass so quickly by, I also started to think seriously about the meaning of life and the importance of time. Somewhat by chance I read again Rudyard Kipling's famous poem, "*IF—*", which I had remembered vaguely from high school, and was especially moved by its closing lines:

> *If you can fill the unforgiving minute*
> *With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,*
> *Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,*
> *And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!*

Those words, "If you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run," crystallized for me the challenge and the

responsibility which are inherent in any life. They remind that time is our most precious possession, whatever the extent may be, and *striving to fill our time with purpose* is the true source of satisfaction and fulfillment.

I have a favourite spot on a high bank beside the Miramichi River, just above Slate Island Lodge, where I love to sit and just watch the river run by. On our first trip into the camps each spring, the water is always up and the current strong and steady. One canoe after another appears from the upriver bend and moves quickly past me out of sight around the island, each one of them having started from the Half Moon Pool, or even further up from Juniper. That canoe trip, which I have done many times over the years, is an unforgettable way to spend two or three days – running a wilderness stretch of river, navigating a few light chutes of whitewater on the pole or the paddle, fishing for sea trout or salmon at the right time of year, watching for deer, moose or bear, and just generally taking in the beauty and solitude of one of nature's special settings with which New Brunswick is so richly blessed. I have a sense of great privilege and well-being as, from my vantage point deep in the woods, I am able to share in this peaceful parade floating so quietly downriver.

I feel sure that most people experience a time or place where they become uniquely aware of the magic of life around them, and where they are struck with a sense of awe and reverence at the wonder of our existence in this world. With the good fortune that life has brought to me, there have been many times when I experienced that state of euphoria at simply being alive – running rivers, hooking salmon, flying airplanes, winning elections, making big sales, raising a family and marrying a special person. But this awareness of life grips me more completely when I am sitting under those trees looking out over the Camp Pool at Slate Island than when I am in any other place. I am always intrigued that those waters of the Miramichi have been running down over the rapids at Slate Island Bar, and under the bank where I like to sit, for tens of thousands of years. And here I am, having spent almost eight decades on this earth, still alive and well, and able to witness this wonderful river and all the

works of nature around it, and to feel the spiritual sense of eternity which those running waters always bring to me.

As I watch the river run by, I cannot help but be awed by the reality of my own life also running by, and the obvious questions about the meaning of it all. While each one of us will have a different perspective on what life is all about, it is a gift we have been given, and one common desire for most of us is to strive to make our lives count in small ways or large, to help leave the world a little better than we found it. The extent to which we succeed or not is something for others to judge, but I believe it is more than enough to know within one's own conscience that we have intended well and have tried to make a difference. Those opportunities to contribute come to us all in many ways – at home in the raising of our families, at work in whatever occupation we may have, in political pursuits and through a wide variety of cultural, charitable and conservation activities. During my life I have been blessed with a variety of those opportunities, which have been more fulfilling and rewarding than any one man deserves, and I am very grateful for the good fortune which life has brought me in all such respects.

I dictated the first words of this story on Palm Sunday, April 16, 2000. I was out for a morning walk while my wife Peggy and I were on vacation in Nashville, Tennessee. It was the beginning of an absolutely beautiful day, and we had moved into a new century, so I decided it was time to at least start fulfilling my long-held intention to write this story. Another reason for the inspiration was that the stock market had declined quite sharply the previous week (the first burst of the dot-com bubble, as I recall), which had put a damper on my spirits. I took out the dictaphone to think aloud, and talk about more positive times gone by. Little by little I have worked away at this story over the intervening years, and it has finally come to a close more than a decade later. The story is a review of my life, much like a diary I wish I had started many years ago. I hope it will be of interest to my children and grandchildren not necessarily for any great lessons or inspiration it might impart, but as a link to family history. If it turns out to be of interest to friend

associates or the public at large, so much the better, and I will be flattered wherever that is the case.

In broad strokes, this story is about the more than fifty years since starting a small company from scratch, and the diversified business career that has followed; also about parallel careers in politics and public service during much of that time. The primary business, J.W. Bird and Company Limited, and my involvement in subsequent enterprises that arose from it, was founded in December of 1958 and is still going strong, now under employee ownership. The political career was conducted at intervals, commencing on Fredericton City Council in June of 1967 and ending in June of 1974; continuing in the Legislature of New Brunswick from November of 1978 until June of 1982; and concluding in the Parliament of Canada from November of 1988 until November of 1993. Compressed concurrently within those years and continuing to the present day has been an informal third career in volunteer public service, for causes which have ranged from economic development to environmental conservation, to community recreation and wellness.

I have always tried to appreciate the value of life, to make my own life count for something, and to strive to be the best that I can be. Obviously we all fall short, but it is rewarding to try, and to try again. I have long believed that good health is the foundation of all my priorities, so my first investment almost every day is made at the YMCA when I am at home, or the hotel fitness centre when I am on the road, or on a long walk outside wherever I may be. That makes me feel I am responding to Kipling's challenge first thing in the day, and it sets the tone for the hours that follow. When the days are long and the workload large, I look to Kipling's words for staying power. Within that context, I have never been attracted to retirement, but rather – even now – I feel strongly motivated every day to fill my minutes with constructive activity.

My thoughts on that Palm Sunday in Nashville a decade ago were to write a small book about my experiences, to reflect upon what purposes I have been able to serve, and to perhaps discover how best to use the rest of my days. It was then only the beginnings of a manuscript, one I felt would likely be my own unfinished symphony, and one for which there was no deadline except the knowledge of my own mortality. Finally, as the fiftieth anniversary of J.W. Bird and Company Limited approached in 2008, and since starting that business was the most important decision of my life, it seemed the right time to get this story done. The first draft was written by 2008, but two more years have been needed to complete it, and so the final dating is December of 2010, almost eleven full years in the process.

Many people deserve to be part of this story. Most important are those with whom I have worked and served, the friends I have made, and the members of my family.

There is one particular person who has long been my strongest supporter and best friend: my wife Peggy. We are now just past forty-one years of marriage, and it is a tribute to Peggy's strength of character that she has been able to survive and sustain herself through all the trials and tribulations of living with me. She was a daring and devoted woman to become the main parent for two families brought together in 1969; she has been a dedicated and dignified partner to an elected representative at all three levels of government, including five years as the Mayor's wife in Fredericton; and she has proven herself to be one of the very best of female salmon anglers, with a pool at the mouth of Slate Island Brook in her own name, justly earned by hooking and releasing more fish there than any other person. I feel blessed and proud to have Peggy (Lawson Huet) Bird as my wife and partner.

I have refrained deliberately from writing in any great detail about my family, as they deserve their privacy. Suffice it to say, I have felt the support, love and respect of my wife and children in every aspect of my life, to a far greater degree than I have sometimes earned.

The fulfillment which I have enjoyed both in business and in public service would never have been possible without the support and assistance of so many valuable employees and associates with whom I have worked throughout the years. In getting this story done in written

form, and certainly exemplifying the highest standard of all the capable people who have assisted me during my career, I must express special appreciation to Angela Carver, who has been my full-time secretary for almost a decade. She has devoted countless hours to the preparation of draft after draft of the dictated text, and has consistently contributed her own organizational and literary skills to help make this story as good to read as possible. Her own pursuit of excellence is a model and an encouragement to all of us who work around her.

No person in the course of one lifetime could possibly feel more enriched by so many people he has known and respected, liked and loved, than has been the case for me. If I have any regret it is that I have not always returned, for whatever reasons, the support, the loyalty and the affection in as full a measure as has been accorded to me. It seems that few of us ever give as much to life as we receive.

Chapter 1

Shaping the Mould

My life has been essentially lived as an *entrepreneur*. Most of the great opportunities I have experienced in business and politics have arisen from the *freedom* I have enjoyed by owning my own company and being my own boss. That feeling of freedom was never one of independence or false security, of course, because I needed the help of so many people along the way. As well, it was frequently accompanied by a very real sense of anxiety – *a fear that I might fail* – fail to maintain financial solvency, fail to find and keep key people on my team, fail to retain important business relationships with suppliers and customers, fail to be accepted and well understood.

Above all, though, I have always felt the motivating spirit of unrestricted opportunity: the challenge to find the right directions, to take the right chances, to select the right actions and to manage them well. That is the essence of being an entrepreneur: to recognize the opportunities when they arise, to accept the challenges and the risks of failure, and to

hen do your utmost to succeed. There is no pain so deep as failure, there s no joy so sweet as success, and between those two extremes there is the steady satisfaction of an enduring effort to do your best.

It was a daring decision for me to quit a good job in November of 1958, and to start my own business with nothing more than a vague goal and a determined sense of confidence. It was not going to be a short or easy journey for me to become a successful entrepreneur. For many people it is the grim reality of risk that deters them from ever starting in that direction at all, but I found it not so much a matter of courage as one of passion and conviction. I felt the need to take the plunge, to set aside prudence and caution in favour of doing it my own way. It was virtually from a sense of true calling that could not be satisfied in any other way that I was inspired to create J.W. Bird and Company Limited (or Bird-Stairs as it has also come to be known) from scratch.

Entrepreneurship was not so fashionable a term fifty years ago, and was referred to as "going out on your own" or "being in business for yourself." These are not pursuits that can be initiated without facing the prospect of loss. In fact, it would be an oxymoron for one to aspire to be an entrepreneur with other people's money; you cannot truly be an entrepreneur unless, as the saying goes, you have your own neck on the line. Thus it was with considerable apprehension, coupled with great excitement and strong conviction, that I started the company that has become the main work of my life. Upon reflection, I now understand that much of the wish and the will required can be traced back to my childhood.

My roots spring from within New Brunswick; on my father's side from the banks of the Keswick and Nashwaak rivers, and on my mother's side from the lower Miramichi River valley. My paternal grandfather was Densmore Bird of Birdton, and my grandmother was the former Mary Clarkson of Williamsburg. My maternal grandfather was John Williston of Newcastle, and grandmother was the former Margaret MacMaster of Loggieville. My father and mother met while she was training to be a nurse in Fredericton, and our family has made this beautiful small city

our home ever since. My father, John Leo Bird, was born in 1905 and passed away in 1974; my mother, Edith Margaret Williston, was born in 1907 and died in 1988. My parents were raised and married during the aftermath of the Great Depression years, and they left with us a legacy of hard work and a determination to be successful.

I was born at the Victoria Public Hospital in Fredericton on March 22, 1932, followed by my brother Bob in December of 1933 and my sister Anne in December of 1935. As far back as I can remember, the most influential person in my early childhood was grandmother Mary Bird, my father's mother. She was a kind and gentle lady who lived into her nineties, and I was just about her favourite person in all the world. She always gave me a feeling of being loved and understood, a sense of confidence that I would work things out and do well, and most importantly the assurance that she would always be on my side and proud of me. She was the ultimate believer in me, and I was determined to never let her down. Grandfather Densmore Bird was much less an influence, perhaps because he was older and in poor health. I do remember, though, that he seemed to share my grandmother's feelings for me, and I remember his tears when I left home to join the RCMP in 1949, fearing that would be the last time he would ever see me.

My father attended a small country school until grade six or seven, and started his working life cutting and peeling pulp in the woods around Birdton. Eventually he became employed in a dry-cleaning business in Fredericton with a company called Buzzell's, which was owned by a distant relative in the Richards family. He also went to Edmundston and Woodstock to open and operate dry-cleaning plants. My earliest real memory of Dad's work was when he was a salesman for the Hawkins Fruit Company in Fredericton during the Second World War (my father was a diabetic and not a candidate for the military). Shortly after the war he also began selling life insurance for the Maritime Life Assurance Company and for many years combined both jobs, working for Hawkins Fruit during the day and selling insurance at night.

I have always viewed my father as the spirit of our family, because he was filled with kindness, good cheer, humour and eternal optimism. I also know, however, behind that front he was often filled with worry, fear and frustration about how to succeed in life financially, how to support his family as well as he wanted to do, and how to make his life count in a meaningful way. Most of all he worried about how to sustain the affection and respect of his wife and family, and especially of his peers, for being the good man he perceived himself to be. He had emerged from the deep poverty of the Depression years with only a grade school education, and was always driven to reach for a better life. He was also pushed hard by my mother. Sometimes she seemed to push too hard, but perhaps that was the key to discipline, as Dad could be laid back at times, while Mom would seldom tolerate any relief from working towards their joint ambitions and aspirations. For all of these reasons, both my father and mother were very diligent and determined workers all their lives.

In due course, Dad found an opportunity to invest in his own business, a general insurance office in Fredericton called Blair Agency, previously owned by the Fred Blair family, which was located on the top floor of a building on York Street. A few years later he moved to a more visible location in a small wood-frame office building on Brunswick Street, just at the rear entrance to what was then Fredericton High School, and across the street from the old Fredericton Curling Club. It was from that office he soon launched Fredericton Housing Limited with his friend Joe Gorham, who was a skilled carpenter and contractor; thus began a long and successful partnership. The insurance business was soon divested, as together the two partners started construction of the Fulton Heights residential subdivision in Nashwaaksis, which was the first major postwar project of its kind in the Fredericton area. In only a few years it proved to be a successful development, so Fredericton Housing Limited moved on to create another subdivision called Skyline Acres, this time on the south side of Fredericton. That these two communities have continued to develop for years after my father's death is a tribute to his legacy as an innovative and successful businessman.

My father was a great salesman and people person, so he handled those aspects of the business while Joe Gorham managed the building of the homes. They had a wonderful business and personal relationship beginning in about 1952, one that continued successfully until their retirement more than fifteen years later.

I was always proud of my father for his work ethic and for his achievements, and held a deep affection for him. Because of my own personality hang-ups, I was never able to express this to him substantially or sufficiently. In fact, I must confess to having more of my mother's emotional genes, too often dwelling on negative factors, and thus not really knowing my father as fully and well as he deserved. This trait of mine and of my mother's – to look too quickly for weakness, to criticize too early small failures, to be too late with praise and support – has proven to be a troublesome characteristic in many of my human relationships over the years with family, friends and employees alike.

I always saw my mother as the strength of our family. She came from a large and poor family, born and raised in Newcastle at the mouth of the Miramichi, where her father was a mill worker in one of the many forestry operations. She had risen from these beginnings to become a registered nurse at the Victoria Public Hospital in Fredericton, and was always determined that she and her family would have better days. She was smart and strong, and frequently capable of great compassion, but she was a perfectionist herself and did not suffer fools lightly. She insisted that we strive to be the best family possible all the time, regardless of our economic circumstances, and she frequently worked overtime, (including keeping boarders in our home), to help make sure that family financial ends were met.

She ensured that our lives were well-balanced between education, music, recreation, work and also church-going, and she always encouraged us to perform as well as we could. She didn't insist on winning, but on always doing our best. She was a good wife to my father, but could make his life difficult when he let her down. It was a good home I grew up in, with strong love and strong discipline. While I

was still very young my mother virtually adopted her youngest brother, Ted, who lived in our home until he joined the Carleton and York Regiment and was part of the First Division sent to England at the beginning of the Second World War. About three years later, I remember coming home from school one day to find my mother in the depths of great grief, holding a telegram which advised that Ted had been killed in action at the Battle of Casino in Italy. It was then I realized that I had had a sort of older brother, one whom Mother loved as deeply as the rest of us. In that, I also saw my mother's capacity for care and affection, which was sometimes shielded by her strong will and determination.

My mother insisted that we contribute something to our own care, so for several years I delivered *The Daily Gleaner*. My territory during the war years included the military hospital (then located just south of the present Old Government House), No. 7 District Depot (on Woodstock Road near the present-day site of the Delta Hotel) and the Regional Training Centre (located on what is now the Fredericton Exhibition Grounds). I had the special privilege of being allowed into the quarters, offices and barracks of all these military establishments, so got to see a good deal about military life. Perhaps that had something to do with my eventual decision to join the RCMP. My mother also strongly encouraged us to become involved in cultural activities such as music, whereas my own interests were in sports and girls. There is no doubt that I was one of her largest challenges and sources of frustration. Eventually though, I did become a mediocre trumpet player.

My brother Bob, who was almost two years younger, developed great talent on both the piano and the trombone. He eventually went to UNB and became a civil engineer. Kidney cancer ended his days too early. He died in 1992 at the age of fifty-nine, after a life that brought good and happy times to many people, and occasionally frustration to those closest to him. From his earliest days, Bob was a lovable character who made friends easily with his great sense of humour and musical abilities. He was also a well-respected engineer and contractor, and became president of the New Brunswick Road Builders' Association in

1976. Throughout most of his life, Bob was like the original entertainer at the centre of any group, with his hands and mind ready to play the piano upon request. He was widely liked and appreciated for these talents, and the only real frustrations that sprang from them were for his loving wife Shirley, who spent so many evenings sitting on the sidelines while Bob performed into the wee hours of the morning. My deep admiration and affection have always gone out to Shirley for the strength of character, the determination and the discipline which she brought to their family life. She gave her husband immense support throughout his final illness. In my view, Shirley has always resembled her mother-in-law (my mother), which I hope she would take as a mutual compliment to both, which is the way it is intended.

My sister Anne had no rival with her ability to make friends, many of them lasting for a lifetime, from elementary school to the present day. She graduated from Fredericton High School and attended Mount Allison University, where she met and later married Don Profitt from PEI, who had become an RCAF jet pilot. They enjoyed a very happy life together, raising three children, until mid-life incompatibility led to their divorce in the early seventies. After her divorce, Anne eventually moved to Toronto where, with courage, determination and her native intelligence, she was able to establish a long and successful career with the Bank of Montreal. She retired with distinction in 2000. Her primary work at the end was training new young bankers, which she apparently did very well. The vice president of the BMO Bank in Toronto presided at her retirement party, and I was very pleased to appear as a surprise guest. In recent years, Anne has moved to Alberta, then on to British Columbia, where she is living close to members of her family in happy circumstances.

Both my father and mother helped to develop my work ethic. At home we were all expected to take our turn each day doing the dishes. Even now, while I still don't like doing dishes, there is a great sense of satisfaction when a big dinner mess has been cleaned up and the kitchen counter is spic and span. That training in the kitchen and in cleaning

our bedrooms went back as far as I can remember, through grade school and until my very last day at home. My mother was a stickler for detail, and if things weren't done right then they had to be done again.

My mother was also very strict in accounting for the pennies, and she insisted that I report to her each week about my newspaper collections, and how much money I was spending from the proceeds. Even though I was earning this money, she was the boss and allowed me to spend only a small portion on myself, with most of the profits – including the tips – to go into the savings jar. Every so often I would try to hide the tips for my own use, but she had a way of looking me straight in the eye and would know in a second when I was not telling the truth. That discipline was important for many reasons, but most of all it taught me (or scared me) to realize that I could never be a successful liar. Under mother's strict discipline, it was bad enough to be caught doing something wrong, but it was a great deal worse to be caught lying about it. She would have been a great teacher for many businessmen and politicians, and certainly she was for me. I learned early to see and accept the truth as it is, to tell it as it is, to accept the consequences as they may be, and to go forward with good faith and confidence into the next episode of one's life. In contrast my father, while basically an honest man, could tolerate a little white lie, and I suspect he occasionally tried to tell one to my mother. She had his number as well as my own, so truth became the safest way out in our family. As I have learned ever more fully in subsequent years, truth really is the only way out of any situation, and reality must be faced honestly, as grim as it may be.

My mother taught us a great deal about integrity; she taught us that there really are no choices because one's conscience is a basic instinct that compels us to do the right things as we perceive them to be. When we do the wrong things with the right intent and those decisions turn out to be wrong, that is a demonstration of poor judgment, which is bad enough and a weakness we all suffer many times through life. But, as she would so strictly say, to consciously select the wrong direction, to knowingly do the wrong thing is not bad judgment, it is just plain bad,

dishonest and immoral. When we deliberately do the wrong things, she would say that we are offending our own humanity, and contradicting the reason for our existence. My mother's credo was *make your life count for something, or it will be worth nothing at all.*

My education started at age six in grade one at York Street School in September of 1938 where I stayed until grade six in the spring of 1944. I was then transferred to Smythe Street School, which is still standing, just a block below the Fredericton Exhibition grounds. There I completed grades seven and eight by the spring of 1946. I then attended Fredericton High School until June of 1949. The old high school building remains as a junior high school, at the corner of George and Regent Streets just a block from the public market.

I was an average student. My motivation to study was not very strong; I was more interested in extra curricular activities such as the high school hockey team. I found most of the homework quite easy, which eventually became my undoing. My marks were good enough to be accredited to university without the need for writing provincial entrance exams, but because of poor preparation I failed chemistry in my last year of high school. That was a mandatory subject, and consequently I would have needed to pass a supplementary exam to get into university.

In the present day, a young man graduating from high school with even modest marks would be on his way to university as a matter of course, but that direction had never been a compelling one for me. In fact, I don't recall ever giving it very much serious thought, and had virtually no plan or idea about what I wanted to do with my life. One thing was certain and unanimous with my parents: it was time for me to leave home. So it was almost by accidental drift that I became a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in September of 1949 as an underage recruit of seventeen-and-a-half years.

Following graduation I filled out an application, inspired by the news that an RCMP band was being recruited after the tradition of the

quite famous marching band in Ottawa. After only a few weeks of tests and interviews, I was accepted for enrollment as a recruit-in-training. Because the official age qualification was eighteen years, my rank was to be as a special constable for the first six months, a compromise offered because I was eligible as a prospective trumpet player in their new band. It was in the basement of the present Old Government House, (which was then the provincial headquarters for the RCMP), that I was sworn into "the Force" only three months out of high school.

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I still think back to that day in September of 1949 whenever I am visiting Old Government House, such as when I received the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Award from the Lieutenant-Governor, and I also felt very much the same way as a Member of Parliament when I was working with both civil and provincial colleagues to help initiate the restoration of this historic building as the official home of the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick.

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I was promptly shipped by rail to Ottawa where I began my new career at the Rockcliffe Training Division. It was there in the strict atmosphere of the RCMP that I learned the difference between being a know-it-all schoolboy and a raw recruit. The rumour that they treated the horses much better than they treated the men was quite true, and I look back at those days as the most maturing of my life. After about six months at Rockcliffe the band squad was transferred to Regina Depot Division, which is the traditional home of the RCMP. We spent six months there completing the second phase of our training, and then took the equitation program for another three months. When we were recruited, the Force had made a public commitment that the members of the new band squad would be fully trained as policemen in all of the traditions of the RCMP, including the horses, all the while developing into a first class musical and marching band. One of my proudest memories is of our band leading the Calgary Stampede Parade in 1951,

when by that time I had been transformed from a poor trumpet player into a good tuba player, and occupied the left marker position in the front line of the parade formation. It was the thrill of a lifetime for a young man of nineteen to be marching at the head of that famous parade, and wearing the classic red serge uniform of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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That was almost sixty years ago. Who could then have imagined the eventual reality of having three of my children living in Calgary along with seven grandchildren, as has become the case over the years.

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In a very different way from university, the training provided by the RCMP was a form of post-secondary experience that could bring maturity quickly and effectively to an unsettled and naive person such as myself at the time. While its curriculum was not high on academic subjects, the underlying purpose of RCMP training was to sort the men from the boys, and to do so in no uncertain terms. First of all, living at close quarters in barracks with forty or more roommates taught me how to get along with others, or pay the consequences. The RCMP standards for spit and polish, hard work, punctuality, loyalty, courage and team spirit served to instill self-discipline and confidence more fully than I might ever have acquired simply through a college setting or in private life. The cocky high school boy of 1949 was quite a different individual when he graduated in 1951 from RCMP training in Regina.

Although I have often regretted the omission of a university education in my life, I have never doubted my good fortune at being trained by the RCMP, where I so rapidly learned to respect authority and accept responsibility. In many ways that foundation was more important through my life than all the academic knowledge I have lacked. Without that training, I doubt I would ever have been prepared to gain the full benefits of a higher education.

Although my time in the RCMP has proven to be one of the most powerful influences in shaping my life, I decided to leave the Force after only two years in order to get married and start a family. Early after my arrival in Regina, I met an attractive and intelligent young lady named Marilyn Graham, who was a part-time usherette at the local movie theatre and was just finishing high school. After completion of my training and being advised of a transfer by the RCMP back to Ottawa, we decided to get married. In those days, the rules about marriage in the Force were very strict: you had to have five years service after attaining the age of twenty-one years, and I was still just nineteen. The only alternative was to purchase a discharge, which was like buying one's way out of a contract, and so that is what I decided to do. I forget the exact amount of money, though think it was about $350, and somewhere in my records is an honourable discharge certificate with a receipt for that resignation from the RCMP. Coming back to Fredericton, Marilyn and I were married in my parent's home at Parkhurst Drive on September 22, 1951.

It was at that moment of marriage, and for the very first time in my life, I was confronted with the stark and frightening realization that I had an immediate and urgent responsibility to earn a living. Still not twenty, with no educational qualifications except RCMP training, no financial savings or resources of any kind, no means of transportation except a bicycle and the occasional loan of my father's car, and with no job contacts, I realized quickly that the critical thing to do was to get a job, almost any job, and at once. It struck me then, and remains with me now, that the worst thing that can happen to any person is to get caught in a vacuum – like being becalmed at sea – without any course of action, direction or purpose. There is a lot of truth to the old directive, "Just don't stand there, do something!"

So it was on that September day in 1951 that I decided the most important thing of all was to have work, and to always be employed and moving forward. Secondly, I realized how essential it was to be able to keep that job, because others were always after work too. I pledged to myself to work as hard or harder than anyone else, so that would at least

become a distinguishing characteristic I had to offer. From that very beginning, it was clear to me the only secure principle was one of hard work. Ever since then I have tried to give each job and responsibility all that I can in terms of energy, effort, concentration and intensity. It was an attitude born of insecurity, and the absence at the time of any other known capabilities. In the end, I think that principle of hard work has proven to be not only the right one for me but is probably the foundation of any successful career. Regardless of how much education, or how much natural talent, or how much experience or other qualifications a person may have, if they do not apply themselves with truly utmost effort, and hopefully to something they really like to do, then they will never realize their full potential. More than that, they will not enjoy the satisfaction that comes from knowing they have always strived to do their best, "to fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run!"

At the beginning of October 1951, I took the first job I could find, which was shovelling sand into a cement mixer on a big construction project for the new Albert Street School in Fredericton. My starting pay as I recall was little more than one dollar an hour. The contractor was Myles and MacPherson Limited, and the two owners were older gentlemen I came to know later in life when they had become customers of my own company. As it turned out, that would be less than eight years later, and it was during those years I gained a considerable base of working experience that helped to point me in the business directions I have subsequently followed.

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It is an interesting twist of fate that exactly fifty-nine years later I am serving as co-chair of the financial campaign for a new YMCA building that will occupy the site of my first working job, and has brought about demolition of the Albert Street School, my first construction project.

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After only a few hours with the shovel and cement mixer, I knew there had to be a better way. As I contemplated the future and sized up

my capabilities, it became clear to me there was one career above all others that did not depend upon academic qualifications, one where only results count: *the business of sales and the skills of salesmanship*. So from that moment forward, as I made application after application for any job that was an improvement on the last, it was my ultimate goal to find an entry into a professional sales career. That decision gave me a sense of focus and direction to my future, and provided a sense of confidence that there really was an avenue towards success despite the shortfalls in my experience and education. I no longer had any serious qualms about my age or lack of university degree. The early recognition of that classic business lesson, *nothing happens until somebody sells something*, gave me a positive and optimistic outlook about my career that I have never really lost. Along the way I have experienced many disappointments and failures, but I have consistently possessed an inner sense of confidence that I could cope with my responsibilities to my family and also achieve a respectable level of success in my life's work, whatever the circumstances.

That is not to say I was without fear or worry at that time, nor through the years since then. I have always remained acutely aware that *results do count*, and of how vulnerable one is if the right results are not forthcoming when responsible for producing them. Thus, despite the inner sense of confidence, it has been my experience that *fear of failure* is the strongest motivator of all. While it is expressed by different people in different ways, I am convinced that most successful people, especially those who are entrepreneurs, are driven significantly by fear. That is why deadlines, due dates, sales and financial reports, examinations, payrolls, bank loans and all other such moments of truth work so effectively in getting things done. It is the stark responsibility and accountability for results, and the fear of failing to achieve them, that causes most people to set their priorities, to apply themselves in a disciplined way and to stick to the task until it has been successfully completed.

My labour efforts in the construction of Albert Street School lasted little more than a few days. I was soon hired as a rodman on a survey crew

doing a fall project on the future road from Apohaqui to Alma in Fundy National Park, where I worked for the next several weeks. Shortly before Christmas, I heard about a job opportunity with Fraser-Brace Construction Limited, which was a large new enterprise being started in Saint John that involved both the provincial government and the K.C. Irving organization. The job I landed was as a lowly payroll clerk, but it was better money than I had been previously earning, so I jumped at the chance. The office was in Saint John, so I moved my wife Marilyn there and we took up our first residence in a small apartment on Carmarthen Street.

After we arrived in Saint John, I was interviewed by Ed Ferris of Trans Canada Credit Corporation and he hired me as a collection representative early in 1952. I remember him asking me about my aspirations, and I told him I would like to join his company if there was a chance that I could eventually earn $10,000 per year. He thought this was a possibility, although I think he only paid me $500 a month to start. He was a tough and shrewd boss, but a fair man, and I learned a good deal about business discipline from him, and also how to collect money from overdue accounts.

However, my job search for a sales career continued. I had just turned twenty in March of 1952, and was very conscious that my youth and inexperience would be difficult factors to overcome in seeking any serious job opportunity for a professional sales position. Therefore, in composing my employment applications and in my interview style, I paid a lot of attention to sounding and acting as mature as possible. Most of my early applications did not even get a reply, so when Alexander Murray and Company Limited, (a division of Dominion Tar and Chemical Limited, later Domtar) contacted me for an interview in the spring of 1952, it was really an exciting event. The first people I met were Fred Brock of Rothesay and Art Roome of Moncton, who were the sales representatives for western and eastern New Brunswick. They had been jointly covering the northern part of New Brunswick, and the new job would be for that territory, including the Gaspe coast of Quebec, with location in Bathurst or Campbellton.

I feel sure they would have been quite pleased to find any reasonable candidate, and were impressed enough by me to suggest to their regional manager that I should at least be interviewed by him. His name was Peter Wallach, an older Englishman with the manner of a university professor, almost at the age of retirement and a grandfatherly figure to me. At our first interview, I distinctly remember his opening words, "Mr. Bird, you are simply too young and inexperienced for our requirements, but you wrote a good application for such a young man, and I did want to meet you and thank you for it. Maybe sometime in the future there will be another opportunity for us to consider your application again."

In effect, he was turning me down before I had even had a chance to speak to him, so I felt there was nothing to lose by making my strongest sales effort possible. That helped me to forget about any stage fright or jitters that one normally feels at a first interview. With my very best manners and strength of conviction, but without any sense of intimidation, I set out to persuade Mr. Wallach that I was a good candidate, that I desperately needed this job, that I came from a background of sales abilities (as witness my father's success in the insurance business), that I was responsible and well-disciplined as the result of my RCMP training, that I had had good marks in high school and could learn quickly, that I was a very hard worker, that this would be the big break of my life and that I would never let him down.

I recall thinking that Mr. Wallach must have felt a little flustered because he did not expect such a strong approach from a mere boy, and we talked a little longer before the interview ended. He asked me how old I was, and I told him twenty-one. I had already decided to tell that white lie because in those days twenty-one was still the magic age of majority and somehow sounded years older than twenty. I honestly believe that small untruth kept my application alive in his mind, as I feel certain he would never have dared to tell his senior people in Montreal that he was considering a candidate of less than twenty-one years. That age fib kept my foot in the door, and a couple of weeks later I received another call

to meet Mr. Wallach. He advised that he was planning to recommend me to senior company officers for a further special interview. A few days later I met vice-president W.B. Thompson and general sales manager Robert G. Rogers (who in later years became Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia), and they decided to offer me the job.

I remember my starting salary was to be $800 per month, but what was even better I would have a company car. Up to that time, my transportation was by foot or by bus, and owning a car was beyond my wildest dreams. This would not be a new one – a used Chevrolet that another salesman had been driving – but it was a great start. The job was to begin June 1, 1952, so on the Victoria Day weekend my wife and I journeyed to the North Shore in search of a place to live. We found a duplex flat at 39 Patterson Street in Campbellton. That was the first real home for our new daughter Cathy, and provided for the solid beginnings of our family.

It was on that May 24th trip I first met Bob Eddy at his office in Bathurst. He was the purchasing manager for his family's business, George Eddy Company Limited, one of the largest potential customers for building materials in my new territory. They had long been customers of Domtar, but relations had soured over past years because of poor sales coverage, and Mr. Wallach specified that turning Eddy around would be one of my largest challenges. My initial meeting with Bob was not very successful. In fact, he was aloof and skeptical, wondering aloud why Domtar would send such a young new recruit to look after their account. It was not a great start for me, and I remember feeling shocked and disappointed receiving this kind of cool reception merely upon introduction.

Perhaps it was my RCMP training, where I had been ridiculed deliberately by drill masters and bullied occasionally by other recruits who felt they were superior, that allowed me to absorb his disrespect without losing my own composure, and I made a vow to myself that I would some day win his respect and his business. Over time in fact Bob Eddy did become one of my closest friends, and perhaps my greatest benefactor. Seven years later he provided the encouragement and the financial assistance that helped me to start J. W. Bird and Company Limited.

Although I have not always practiced what I learned from such ons as well as I might have, I do look back on those two early eriences with Peter Wallach and Bob Eddy as teaching me the ortance and the potential of conducting intense and diligent human munications. In both of those cases, I started dead in the water, but emaining positive and determined to communicate with them ctively and in terms of their own interests, I was eventually able to get heir respective channels and to develop a constructive relationship. It sn't always work, but if you look for and try hard enough to find an ning with another person, then eventually you can build on that to mmunicate effectively. There are many old sayings that teach one to unto others" or "put yourself in his shoes", and it truly does take a erous and sensitive attitude towards the other person before fractured mmunication links can be recognized and connected. It can be done, l can prove to be one of life's most rewarding practices in terms of lding and keeping both professional and personal relationships.

It has always fascinated me that the first call in my new sales job uld turn out to be such a pivotal relationship for my whole life. I arly recall how discouraging it was to meet Bob Eddy that first time, l to endure his dubious reception, and I also recall how I realized that rning to sell to him would be the biggest challenge of my sales career, ver that career was to be a successful one. So I resolved to find a way. part of my sales training, I had done some reading and listened to pirational speakers. One of the speakers, whose lesson I will never get, said something like this, "Bud, be yourself, always your best self; d, be a good listener; and Bud, serve them to death!" So I determined apply those principles to Bob Eddy, and eventually that approach orked wonders.

One Saturday morning at home in Campbellton I got a call from ob at his office in Bathurst. It had probably been at least a year since I d first met him and he was still not even calling me by name. On this casion, however, he needed a service and wanted it as quickly as ssible. Without hesitation I told him I would be in Bathurst in two

hours, which surprised and pleased him. I was able to provide the service he needed, and from that point forward he became a good customer, and eventually a lasting friend. Beneath his cool manner initially displayed to me, Bob Eddy was a highly intelligent and compassionate man. He became a loyal and generous friend, whom I respected, trusted and cared for as much as any person I have ever met.

During that critical Saturday afternoon meeting with Bob, my wife Marilyn and our baby Cathy remained in the car for almost two hours outside his office. As we were leaving the building, Bob asked, "Who is that in your car?" I told him, and he admonished me, saying he would have wanted to invite them to spend the afternoon at his house. I pointed out this was hardly our expectation because he and I were barely on speaking terms, which embarrassed him a little. He took us home to meet his wife, Isabel, who received us with gracious kindness. She also has become a life-long friend.

We lived in Campbellton for three years. It was during that period that I made many of the best friendships of my life, including Al and Snook Anslow, Charlie and Gladdie Connely, Bud and Pat Hellyer, Blair and Jean Johnstone, and the Bob Firth family. Except for Snook, Gladdie and Jean, these friends have all now passed away. I remember each one of them with deep respect and affection. Bud Hellyer was a former professional hockey player and the director of hockey operations for the Town of Campbellton when I met him. I actually tried out for his senior team, but as he often put it, "you tripped over the blue line and injured yourself, which saved both you and hockey from each other." I was not a great athlete, and Hellyer was never one to mince words. We continued to be good friends, played a lot of golf together, and when I was transferred from Campbellton to Fredericton in 1955 Bud Hellyer was hired as my replacement on the North Shore. He stayed with the company for many years, eventually becoming general sales manager of Domtar Construction Materials Limited for all of Canada.

Among all the wonderful people I have known over the years, the closest personal friendship I have ever had was with Charlie Connely,

a man who came to be like a much-loved older brother. We met during a hunting trip at Craven's Gulch on the Upsalquitch River, with Bud Hellyer and Al Anslow, and almost immediately a close bond was established which only grew stronger over the years. It was as though we instinctively knew each other within our minds and hearts, and we shared a great common love for fishing, hunting and the outdoors. We were able to confide in each other, with a complete sense of trust and understanding, and yet we were also able to compete in the woods and at the poker table with great combativeness. In fact, we almost came to blows on several occasions, but those incidents only helped to strengthen our friendship and they made great stories to laugh about afterwards.

When Charlie was fifty-seven he became ill with serious depression, and eventually took his own life. I thought I could read his mind: "I'm not much good to anyone anymore, and since I cannot shake this depression I'll put myself out of misery so that I will no longer be a burden to my family or friends." That was not the act of a well man, but it was inherent in his nature that he could never tolerate being a burden to anyone. He always did more than his share, and took great pride in being his own man. In all of my lifetime, I have never met anyone who was so universally well-liked and respected by all who knew him, and I have always felt highly favoured by fate that I got to know and relate to Charlie Connely better than most. I remember him with deep respect and affection.

It was in those days living in Campbellton that I got my first real taste of hunting and fishing, which turned into a love for the forests and rivers that has endured all my life. During that period, I caught my first Atlantic salmon with Al Anslow and Bob Firth at Mowats Pool on the Upsalquitch River, and also for the first time became involved in a small way with the conservation mission for this great fish, a cause that has consumed many of my later years and has brought me tremendous interest, enjoyment and satisfaction.

Also during those travels to Gaspe in Quebec and to the Caraquet Coast in New Brunswick, I experienced the reality of Canada's French-speaking people, and even acquired a small vocabulary which I was able

to use in business. One of my greatest regrets is that I did not take the tin or opportunity to become fluent, which would then and later have bee possible with some dedicated effort and study. The rewards for me having a second language in Canada would have been priceless in n business life, and especially in my involvement in municipal, provinci and federal politics. At least I did acquire an appreciation of the bilingu and bicultural nature of our country, and that helped me in later life shape constructive political views about government policy on these issue

Back in the early 1950's, I began to realize that Frenc Canadians, both in Quebec and New Brunswick, were aspiring f recognition of their language and their culture as legitimate realities the fabric of Canadian life. Their reaction was very positive when a English person such as myself would strive even in a modest way to u French words in a conversation. This always seemed to break the ic and the response was invariably one of friendly appreciation. Comir from Fredericton where the French language was seldom heard, it w an awakening to the reality that French-speaking people were significant part of our Canadian population, and that many of the could not speak English at all. Thus, it was not difficult for me to acco Francophones recognition and respect for their distinctive language ar culture, nor was it difficult in later years to strongly support progran for equality of French language and culture during my terms of office all three levels of government.

When I arrived back in Fredericton to take up my new territo in 1955, the construction of CFB Gagetown at Oromocto was just gettir under way, and it was part of my job to pursue the potential for buildir materials on that megaproject. The City of Saint John was also in n territory, so that I regularly spent two or three days in the middle of eac week there. During that same period in the mid-50's, my fathe business, Fredericton Housing Limited had started to grow, and becan an important customer for building materials. That connection helpe me to develop a major business opportunity for Domtar with James Neill and Sons Limited, a local wholesaler of hardware, buildir

rials, plumbing and electrical supplies. This was the company that uld later acquire, in June of 1969, about fourteen years after ning to Fredericton.

With the potential offered by the development of CFB Gagetown, rowth of Fredericton Housing Limited, the opportunities in the City int John and the rest of my territory (which spanned the triangle Sussex to St. Stephen to Perth-Andover), I had all the makings for e very successful years. My performance and sales results were istently above average. The pay in those days was still pretty modest, for a good salesman, and I started to take note of the apparent ncial success being enjoyed by independent owners of smaller sales panies, such as H.M. Lennox Limited, a sales and distribution cy in Moncton. In fact, Max Lennox had started his own career king for a large company like Domtar, but eventually went out on his as a sales agent. He had become a great inspiration to aspiring epreneurs in our field of business. I was no exception in dreaming of e day emulating his initiative, but with a wife and growing family – ow had four children – and with no savings in the bank, I was in a poor position to even think about taking the risk of starting out on own. Nevertheless, the dream was there and it was intensifying.

My immediate supervisors in New Brunswick were Art Roome at t, and later Charlie Gray with whom I developed a frequently strating relationship, although turning out to be mutually friendly l respectful. When the position of sales supervisor had become ant, I thought I deserved the job; Charlie, with more experience and eral years older, got it instead. The disappointment helped to sharpen focus for a career on my own, where results would count and would be subject to the varying opinions and political judgements of higher nagement. My desire to become an entrepreneur was burning nger than ever.

In 1957, a minor move upward came when I was asked to serve ales promotion supervisor for the whole Atlantic Region, and took up ice in Saint John. We moved as a family to Champlain Heights in that

city, and I traveled extensively to other Domtar territories in New Brunswick, PEI, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. This provided me with a basic knowledge about those markets, which proved invaluable in later years. The new responsibilities also brought me an increased sense of capability and confidence. That broader experience even more sharpened my aspirations to start my own business.

Chapter 2

Taking the Risk

The first really big promotion for me at Domtar came in the fal of 1958, when I was offered a move to Toronto as a sales supervisor. Thi so-called advance to the big leagues of business was to be an importan step in my progress towards higher management, and I was to worl under the direct supervision of a renowned task master who would trai me well. Following a two-week introductory session in Toronto, I cam to the clear realization that it was time to make the move towards m own destiny. Two factors stood out: my new boss was arrogant an overbearing beyond belief, and in financial terms any real advantage from this promotion were quickly absorbed by the costs of living i Toronto. Ironically, that long sought moment of supposed success witl Domtar proved to be the catalyst for a brand new career on my own.

As I was boarding the plane to come home at the end of thos two weeks in Toronto, I decided to call my old customer and friend, Bo Eddy in Bathurst, to ask if I could come to see him that weekend. Fo

ne years, he had encouraged me many times to start my own business, d had frequently reminded me that "if you can find the courage, I can lp you to find the way." He was pleased to get my call, and when I ived in Bathurst that next Saturday morning he looked at me and said, gather you have finally found the courage!"

That weekend visit, and the subsequent decision that emerged om it, marked the beginning of a whole new and lasting dimension to y life. Little more than one month later, a new business was born, J.W. rd and Company Limited (JWBCO).

I had indeed found the courage, and by the time that weekend as over Bob Eddy had assured me of his support for a bank loan that ould be enough to get me started. Within the next couple of days I bmitted my resignation to Domtar, which became effective on ovember 30, 1958. By then I had arranged a $15,000 line of credit with e Royal Bank, secured by Bob Eddy's signature. That amount of money, hich seems awfully small now, was determined to be just enough to ed my family and cover my business travelling expenses for the better rt of one year.

That time frame provided the dimensions for success or failure the risk I was taking on. If I could not demonstrate clear signs of basic ccess before the end of 1959, at least sufficient to sustain myself ithout borrowing further, then I would accept the fact that I had tried d failed. The future after that would be to find a new and steady job to pport my family, with the added burden of eventually repaying my iled business debts.

Both the Royal Bank and Bob Eddy understood and accepted is strategy, and of course it was Bob who encouraged me so thusiastically to take this big step, because he had confidence that I ould succeed. While his financial support was pivotal to getting started, was the moral strength he provided that inspired me most of all. ldom have I felt another person believe in me so completely as Bob ddy did, and he shared and enjoyed every success that followed. The

man who had acted so distant as a customer when I first approached him in May of 1952 had become my strongest business ally and one of my closest friends just six years later. I realize now that his initial aloofness was a sort of screen that disguised a generous, caring and compassionate spirit, and one of the brightest intellects to be found among his peers. Over time he became widely recognized for his sharp mind and engaging ways. He served as a director of NB Tel for many years which was one of the pinnacles of his career, along with his active participation in the very successful Eddy family businesses.

With my resignation from Domtar to become effective at the end of November and with no thought of turning back, my company was born, at least in my own mind, on the first day of December, 1958. This was not the best time to be setting out on my own, just a month before Christmas and with the long winter months of traditional downtime in the construction business in sight, but "the die had been cast," as the saying goes. There were many who were watching me with great interest and concern, not the least being my immediate family, but also my former colleagues at Domtar, my previous customers and competitors and of course Bob Eddy, who was now to become a minority shareholder in the new business venture. The stakes were high, but the challenge was exciting, and I had an inner sense of resolve and confidence that I would not fail.

I was still living in Saint John at the time, but at the urging of my father we decided to move into one of the new homes he was building in Fulton Heights at Nashwaaksis. By that time, Marilyn and I had all four of our children (Cathy was born in Fredericton in 1952, Stephen at Campbellton in 1954, Nancy in Fredericton in 1956 and Bill in Saint John in September of 1958), so it made good sense to locate the family in the Fredericton area where my own parents were living, and where I had my best business contacts from previous years with Domtar.

Our three-bedroom bungalow at 224 Cedar Avenue cost $15,000, with a down payment of about $1,000 which was financed for me on credit by Fredericton Housing Limited. It was in the basement of that

house that my company had its first office. (It is an interesting coincidence that exactly twenty years later that home was purchased by Gerry McBride, who eventually became the president of Bird Holdings Ltd. He and his wife Kathy raised their family at that address for several years, and neither Gerry nor I were aware of this connection until recently discussing the founding of JWBCO.)

My plan was to become a manufacturer's agent or distributor, pursuing markets in Atlantic Canada where many national companies frequently deemed the opportunities to be too small to justify their own sales people. Also, because my experience in selling had been entirely related to the building industry, that would be the sector for which I would be most qualified in the eyes of prospective suppliers, and of course I already knew many of the main customers in the building industry throughout the region, thanks to my days with Domtar.

To initiate this plan, and without the benefit of computers, internet or websites, I obtained a copy of the Fraser Trade Directory, which was the major national business register for all of Canada. After several days of analyzing its listings to find the names of manufacturers in the construction industry that were not well represented in the Maritimes, I prepared a target list of about three hundred and fifty companies to whom I composed a letter of introduction. That was one of the most important letters I have ever written, and its ultimately successful results have helped cause me to consistently concentrate more deeply on my writing than on any other form of communication.

Before launching that mailing, however, two small key issues to be resolved were the name of the company and the design of a letterhead. In a telephone discussion with Bob Eddy about these matters, he said, "Put your own name on the business, so that your reputation is always at stake, and you will be all the more inspired to make it successful." A letterhead design was sketched out by a small firm in Saint John, (the owners were Jim Stackhouse and Ralph Olive), and it featured a very sharp logo of a symbolic bird in flight, bright red, accompanied by a distinctive black font, all capitals, with the name of the company. It

seemed a rather attractive and businesslike design, and neither that basic logo nor the company name font have changed to this day.

In 1969 we added a shorter form to the company name Bird-Neill, to identify the acquisition of Neill's Wholesale Limited tha year. In 1975 the same trademark was changed to Bird-Stairs upon th purchase of William Stairs, Son and Morrow Limited in Halifax. Tha trademark continues to be the principal image of the company in it fifty-second year, the same red bird logo, and I feel a deep sense of prid and satisfaction whenever I see it on a letterhead, or on a sign, or whe I hear people mention the company name. It is always a reminder of th valuable enterprise I had been able to create and help make last. In m view there is no other reward that surpasses that feeling of creativ satisfaction; not money, not prestige, not praise from others, but simpl the sweet knowledge that your own stamp is on the world in some smal way. I guess it's all about the human desire to find a meaning to one's life your "sixty seconds run".

Those three hundred and fifty letters were sent out in earl January of 1959, with most of the responses received by around th middle of February. As I recall, about one hundred and fifty replies cam back, including some that were merely acknowledgments. After a serie of follow-up telephone calls, these were further refined to about sixty five firms with whom there seemed to be sufficient potential to warran face-to-face contact. Accordingly, I planned for an extended trip t Montreal and Toronto early in March, for the purpose of calling on eac one of these prospective suppliers. The trip was made by rented car o a very tight budget, and lasted almost three weeks. In the end I called o all sixty-five of those manufacturers, and by the time I returned hom had established good prospects for about twelve sales agenc arrangements, each one of them pertaining to the construction industr

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Interestingly, there was one manufacturer who had offered me line of products to sell which included a group of products not related t

e construction business at all. It was Standard Tube of Woodstock, ntario, which manufactured steel posts for builders, and also a full line tubular boat trailers. The latter group included the first tent camping ıiler to be introduced to the Canadian market. This company turned ıt to be a good quality manufacturer, and its trailers provided a unique portunity to diversify into selected recreational markets. One of my best stomers was Gerald Sutherland of Lincoln who had just started his own ısiness the previous year, called Sutherland's Marine and Equipment d., located in an old service station building on the lower Lincoln Road. f course, the boat trailers fitted well into his main line of business, and was the first dealer to ever display the tent trailer. In the first few years JWBCO's existence, Sutherland Marine was one of our best customers, ıd Gerry has remained a good friend ever since that time. The success of s own company is one of Fredericton's best business stories, growing to clude not only boats and motors, but also introducing both Honda and lazda car dealerships in the capital city.

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The most promising and strategic line of products I had acquired, ıough I didn't realize it at the time, was a group of hardware items for the ɔncrete and masonry trades known as *form hardware* or *construction ɔecialties*, supplied by Drew Brown Limited from Montreal. When I had een planning my trip, I got some advice from an old customer and friend, ert Edney, who was the sales representative for Neill's Wholesale in redericton, telling me that there was a demand for concrete accessories ıch as form ties and wedges used in the forming of basement walls. There ras only one small specialty supplier of these products in the Maritime rovinces, and Bert felt that this would be the kind of a product line to ive me something unique and in demand to sell from the start. So I took is advice, and searched diligently for a manufacturer of form hardware.

That supplier, Drew Brown, was a basic manufacturer of form ies and associated concrete accessories, and this relationship provided ne with a direct manufacturing link and a position in the marketplace. ven better than that, Drew Brown did not want a sales agent on a

commission basis, but rather insisted on giving me a schedule of the best costs they could offer on all products, and authorized me to act as the company's exclusive buy/sell distributor. Drew Brown would service my orders and invoice directly to my customers at whatever selling price I had arranged, and then they would credit me with the difference as a margin of profit between the selling price and my assigned cost. This was an unbelievable arrangement really, in that Drew Brown took the credit risk, and instead of paying me a normal commission (five or ten per cent), they sent me a cheque for whatever amount of profit margin I was able to achieve on every sale. This was the best of all worlds for JWBCO, as virtually no capital was required.

As well, Drew Brown was a distributor of a wide range of other construction specialties that it did not manufacture, and so with those products available to me as well I was able to become a full-scale construction specialty supplier right from the start. If there was one single breakthrough of good fortune in the history of JWBCO, one that moved it forward more swiftly and strongly than any other, it was the success of my original contact with Drew Brown, and the resulting direction as a construction specialties distributor that grew from that beginning.

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Bert Edney had been both a customer and a mentor since I first met him around 1955 when I returned to Fredericton as a sales representative for Domtar, with Neill's as my largest customer. This unique local character, quite a large and gruff-looking man with perpetual rumpled suit and half-smoked cigar, took me under his wing to not only give me a great deal of business, but also a large and continuing dose of homespun philosophy and guidance which has served me well to this day. Seemingly able to see through me, he became a kind of conscience, a person I would always want to please and make proud. Along with Bob Eddy, the great benefactor and friend I have described separately, Bert Edney was one who also encouraged me to go into business for myself when I was thinking of doing so in 1958. I remember how enthused he was when I finally made the break, and took the first steps with JWBCO.

I recall his distinct advice - "Bud, go out and try to find a manufacturer of form ties! Our contractors are through using wire to tie up their forms, and there is a demand for these new products for which we have not yet found a source of supply."

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It was on the direct basis of that suggestion I pursued and found the firm of Drew Brown Limited, and the rest of that story is fundamental to the successful history of our company. Had we not encountered that market direction from the start, and all of the unique opportunities which the Drew Brown connection brought to us, it is unlikely that JWBCO would have been so quickly successful as it had become.

Thus, JWBCO was launched with more good fortune and immediate success in those early months than I could ever have anticipated. My first official sale occurred in March of 1959, when Bert Edney and Neill's Wholesale proved true to their word. They purchased ten thousand snap-in form ties for housing contractors in the Fredericton area, and JWBCO was on its way. By the time 1959 was over, the company's gross commission earnings totalled exactly $37,442.79, which was most exciting, especially given that my entire operations were based on a bank credit limit of only $15,000. From that commission income I had to deduct my salary ($12,689) and my travel and business expenses (approximately $12,000 including depreciation on my car), but that still left the company *in a profitable position for its first year: $12,556.21 to the penny*. What a joy to own a company that actually made a profit from the start!

I experienced a wonderful feeling of satisfaction at the end of that year knowing that my one-man business had survived its birth pains, with a good chance at future success. Based on an average commission rate as high as fifteen per cent, actual sales volume invoiced by my suppliers in 1959 would have been approximately $500,000. In 1960 those sales rose to more than $600,000, and the pre-tax profitability of the company almost doubled.

In addition to all of its unique marketing features, the Drew Brown relationship also provided me with a knowledgeable and experienced mentor in the person of E.H. (Ernie) Jones, who was their marketing manager, and with whom I had negotiated the basic distribution agreement to represent them in Atlantic Canada. For the first five years of JWBCO's existence, Drew Brown was our most important supplier and Ernie Jones my most valued business friend. He seemed to take a personal interest in this new young entrepreneur from Fredericton and the company he was striving to create, to the point where I became almost his protégé.

After those early years, although there was never any specific falling-out with Drew Brown, as JWBCO grew in size and success there were new and conflicting opportunities that intruded on my absolute commitment to our first historic supplier. There were several product lines like Sternson's Chemicals and Coatings from Brantford, Ontario, where Drew Brown itself was merely a distributor and not a basic manufacturer. Eventually, Sternson's wanted to come directly to us for the marketing of their products in Atlantic Canada because there was not room in the marketing structure for two levels of profitability, both Drew Brown and ourselves. I recall quite distinctly that Ernie Jones felt we were letting him down by purchasing Sternson products directly from that manufacturer and not from him. In a moral sense his feelings were understandable, but in a business sense any artificial pricing structure cannot be sustained. There must be a competitive integrity of function or the ultimate customer is paying too much, and the structure is vulnerable to eventual failure.

Over time the Drew Brown relationship waned, and eventually drifted apart when that company stopped manufacturing even its own products and was merely acting as a master distributor. By that time JWBCO had grown in stature to the point that it virtually paralleled the Drew Brown position as the distributor of choice in Atlantic Canada and could purchase directly at favourable costs from all manufacturers. It was the classic tale of the student overwhelming the teacher by gaining equal or greater knowledge and market power.

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It is certainly nostalgic, and indeed sad for me now, to think back ıut meeting Ernie Jones more than fifty years ago, and to reflect on the t that we eventually lost touch altogether. I feel ashamed to say that I not aware of his final fate, although presumably he has passed on, ng at least twenty years my senior when we met. He was a good and ɔortant influence on my life.

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To be truly successful, every business needs some unique ʻantage or feature that makes it different from its competitors. When arted, it was only with a vague sense of being able to sell building terials, and a confidence that I could find some manufacturers who uld need my sales services in the Atlantic Region. I had no grand n for a special niche in the marketplace, and so it was a wonderful ce of business timing and good fortune that, without any research or rket studies whatsoever, I was able to stumble into a small sector of construction industry that was being poorly served in Atlantic ıada. This offered JWBCO the chance to become a uniquely ctional and profitable business in an important sector of the regional nomy.

What I did not realize sufficiently in those first few years, even h the success I was experiencing – and what would come to haunt l hurt me in later times – was just how strategically important the ıstruction specialties sector was to the future of JWBCO. Not only ; that space under-represented in the Atlantic markets but, because it ; comprised of specialty products, suppliers were hard to find and re was a fair amount of market knowledge and experience required to n identify the opportunities. It was a difficult sector to discover and nter. In retrospect, JWBCO should have protected its position in that tor of the marketplace almost as if it were patented. Certainly, great e should have been exercised in guarding the propriety nature of ıpany contacts and its specialized market knowledge.

By Christmas of 1960, JWBCO seemed to be well on its way. From the very start, I had the vision of a growing company, and did my best to project that to both suppliers and customers through marketing techniques such as printed price lists, trade mailings and diligent attention to business details. It seemed very important to try and convey the image of a full-scale company operation, even though it was then only a one-man band. My office was still in the basement of our home where I did paperwork on the weekends, after travelling the whole region during the week. Early on, I started to use a dictaphone to record sales, write letters and make notes to myself, with typing assistance hired to transcribe my tapes every Saturday. This worked well for a couple of years, but by early 1961 I had employed my first full time secretary/assistant, a bright young woman named June Heins, and we moved into our own small office space at the Rioux Building just off Hanwell Road. In June of 1961 we were joined by Geoff Munn, more or less as office boy then, but now almost fifty years later the successful president and principal owner of the company. His career from the bottom to the top is one expression of the lasting success of JWBCO that makes me feel especially proud.

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I first met Geoff when I was coaching a juvenile hockey team on the open air rink in Fulton Heights around 1956/57, while I was still employed by Domtar. He was one of the better players on our team, and certainly one of the most genuine and friendly in the group. I clearly remember being impressed with his hard work and his will to win. A few years later, those recollections made me want to hire him, and there has never been any regret. Occasionally, we have had our differences in a business sense, but Geoff has always responded positively to every challenge placed before him, and beneath that rather quiet, almost shy and laid back manner, is a strong character of intelligence and integrity, who always wants to do well and knows that results count. It is not a surprise to me that he has risen to lead the second generation of JWBCO, and he will have his own success story to tell about the company.

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It was in our third year, 1961, that total sales volume passed *one million dollars*, invoiced either by our suppliers or by ourselves, and despite increasing expenses for new staff, our pre-tax profits also continued to grow. That represented a level of achievement I had not dared dream about when getting started. Mostly, my thoughts were focused on the bank loan, and driven far more by the fear of going bankrupt than the prospects of creating real value. That plateau made me realize what a wonderful opportunity lay ahead if I could continue to apply myself to achieving our full potential.

Around the beginning of the third year, I decided to expand our sales staff with the employment of close friend Jack Logan in Halifax, with whom I had worked at Domtar, and Carl Linton, a long time family friend in Fredericton who had been a young pilot hero in the RCAF during the war. With these additions to our small force, the business continued to do well over the next couple of years, still essentially acting as a commission sales agent with a focus in construction specialties and covering all four Atlantic Provinces.

Then, without any warning, my first human resources calamity struck. I learned that Jack Logan and Carl Linton were planning to go into business together as competitors to JWBCO, intending to pursue the same marketing concepts and to use all the trade contacts and market knowledge with which they had become familiar at our company. Even more distressing, their plans were being made while continuing to work on JWBCO time, payroll and expense accounts. Once I was able to confront and confirm their intentions, both men were immediately dismissed. It was only a few weeks later that the two of them announced the formation of their new company, Blackhawk Construction Products, with Carl looking after New Brunswick from Fredericton, and Jack covering Nova Scotia from Halifax. Their company only lasted a few short years, but for me it was a prelude of events to come, a constant business danger which I did not recognize sufficiently even then.

It is hollow satisfaction, but looking back I think I can justly claim to be one of the best developers of competitive sales talent in the Atlantic

construction market during my career. Even today, some of the major competitors to JWBCO are owned and managed by former employees. In the final analysis, most if not all of those defections could likely have been prevented if I had more fully appreciated the unique and proprietary values JWBCO was building, and if I had acquired a more sensitive understanding about the management of human resources.

The Blackhawk situation was a deeply discouraging one for me, made all the more frustrating because these men had been close friends. Unfortunately, it was only the first of similar defections that would follow in later years, and I have always felt it among my major failures that I was unable to prevent such desertions and sustain the loyalty of those employees. The loss of valuable personnel is one of the most perilous of business risks, but even more so when accompanied by the prospect of creating serious competitors, who would be using proprietary knowledge and training acquired freely and in good faith from your own company.

I don't regard employees as being owned by or obligated to any company indefinitely. It is primarily the responsibility of company management and ownership to establish the conditions that will maintain loyalty and preserve relationships. Ordinarily, I do feel there is a principle of fairness and integrity that both employer and employee owe to one another, and obviously must be based on circumstances of mutual respect. However, when proprietary or fiduciary risks are involved, more formal and binding employment agreements should be considered. A major omission of management on my part was in not having such firm employment pacts negotiated at the time key people were hired, especially if they were to become senior management or sales personnel with access to sensitive company knowledge and strategic information. In retrospect, it was simply stupid on my part to invest in training employees, to give them company knowledge, to motivate them with entrepreneurial spirit, and then to see them walk away to become competitors, either by defecting to other companies or starting their own businesses. The best time to exchange commitments and establish obligations with employees is at the time they are hired, when both

ties are in a positive spirit. After people have become valuable to the ganization, and begin to recognize their competitive value to others themselves, it is frequently too late to dissuade them from leaving, or prevent the competitive damage that can follow.

Despite the Blackhawk experience, and with my better lgement telling me to adopt a more cautious approach such as I have scribed, my underlying optimism and faith in human nature has ntinued to prevail. Whenever I have hired new people in whom I had nfidence, I never felt it appropriate to challenge them with ployment contracts. Perhaps it is because good people are so hard to d and to employ, but naively I have always been confident that new ople would enjoy working with me, would be challenged and otivated by my style, and would therefore develop a deep sense of alty. In retrospect I have sadly come to realize how damaging that ief can be, and how employee defections could have been prevented th better human resource management.

On the other side of the ledger, of course, I have enjoyed mendously loyal relationships with numerous employees and other sociates over the years. Two that stand out above all others are Geoff nn and Debby Parsons, who have worked with me for almost their tire careers, and there are a great many others who have given decades their working lives to my management and direction. For every one of ose individuals, I hold an immense feeling of pride and appreciation.

I must confess, however, that in the early days of my business reer I did not give adequate appreciation to the reality that good and al employees are among the most valuable resources in any company. s also true, of course, that customers and suppliers are critical resource ationships at any time, but especially when a new company is getting start.

I have certainly been guilty on many occasions of letting those portant relationships get out of balance: placing my greatest emphasis customers and suppliers for the sources of revenue which they

represent, and too readily seeing employees as cost and expense considerations instead of as growth and profit opportunities. This is especially easy to do in difficult business times, when cost control is the first priority, and also in situations where an employee's performance may be mediocre or questionable, and where training, understanding and counselling might ordinarily be the best courses of action. These are human relations dilemmas that every company and every manager must face regularly, and it takes great will and wisdom to make the distinction between specific employees as profitable resources or expensive liabilities.

Our compensation and rewards system at JWBCO was always competitive, but not as generous as might have been the case for outstanding performance. While I have described the absence of firm employment agreements, I must also confess that incentive plans were not well designed or very effective. I know it is true that positive motivation through rewards and incentives is far more productive than defensive instruments such as employment agreements, but I have managed to fail to some extent on both counts.

Especially, I should have treated senior sales and management people with higher levels of confidence and reward, and been prepared to delegate the future of the company more fully to them. Somehow, I have never quite been able to remove myself from the sense of ultimate responsibility, and hence have been reluctant to convey authority to others in an effective way. That is something successful entrepreneurs must learn to do, especially if they have aspirations for future growth and development of their businesses. There is a tried and true saying which has escaped me all too often: "managing anything means managing people."

One of the most critical aspects of business to which I gave my attention at all times was our bank financing. From our second year we had commenced to keep a small inventory of Drew Brown products in a public warehouse in New Brunswick, so as to provide better service and earn higher margins. Accordingly, our need for financing of both accounts receivable and inventory had increased, and our original bank

manager at the Royal had only reluctantly allowed us to increase our line of credit, first to $25,000, then $50,000 and finally $75,000. He was from the old school of banking, and when he saw that our credit limit had increased five-fold in less than five years, he thought it was time to have this young company stay put and gain some stability.

I was impatient to keep growing as quickly as possible, and started talking to other banks. It so happened that the assistant manager at the Bank of Montreal, Murray Brown, lived just across the street from me. We became friends, and eventually he offered to double our line of credit if JWBCO would move its account to the Bank of Montreal. So during our fifth year we did just that, a scary move for a young company. The new credit limit provided me the confidence and financial security to move forward with plans to improve both warehousing stocks and direct sales.

With the increased financing available from the bank, we started to do more and more business under our own invoice, because profit margins were larger. The first year that we exceeded $1 million in sales strictly from JWBCO direct billings was 1965. By that time as well, our investments in accounts receivable and inventory were close to $500,000, and our bank borrowings were approaching $300,000 which was double the line of credit extended to us by BMO only two years previously. Despite the growth, or perhaps because of it, the then BMO manager (also from the old school) was beginning to see us as growing too fast, and pretty soon he was gently applying the brakes. We quickly decided that a further change in our banking arrangements was going to be required.

In late 1966, JWBCO decided to change banks for the third time, accepting a proposal from the Toronto Dominion Bank and its then manager, Carl Loughrey, for a line of credit up to $600,000, which was again double the existing line at the Bank of Montreal. It seemed that once any given bank had seen its original line of credit double, it became gun-shy and wanted to see a few more years of stability before increasing further. Each time, however, across the street was another banker who wanted the business and was prepared to virtually double again what the credit limit had been before.

We were received by Carl Loughrey in a more positive attitude than we had previously experienced, and we were determined to establish new guidelines for growth before jumping to yet another bank. So we asked Carl to introduce us to his senior people, both within the Maritimes and at TD's head office at Toronto, so that we would in future have the contacts and the access to make representations beyond the local manager if that became necessary. As we learned in those days, each manager had a limit on the size of a credit with which he was able to deal at his own discretion. In the case of TD, however, Carl Loughrey promised that he would push us higher whenever our growth took us beyond his own lending limits. He was true to his word.

We stayed with the Toronto Dominion Bank for almost a full decade, until the opportunity came in 1974/75 to purchase William Stairs Son & Morrow Limited in Halifax which, after long negotiations, TD declined to support. Once again, our own bank could not accept the rate and level of growth we were pursuing. I still recall the TD vice president from Toronto saying, "Why do you want to risk this big move to almost double the size of your company? Why don't you go more slowly and safely for awhile?"

So for the third time in little more than fifteen years, we were faced with the situation that our growth and aspirations were exceeding the comfort level of our bank. By this time our credit line at TD was in the area of $1 million, and the proposal to purchase the Stairs firm would at least double that operating requirement, plus additional capital to buy out the Stairs shareholders. It was a big bite for TD, but I felt they should have been as excited as ourselves at the prospect of expanding on a large scale into the major market of Halifax. That was not the case, but fortunately for us, (or unfortunately as I sometimes reflect in hindsight), there was an aggressive new banker on the Halifax scene in the person of Jean Fournet of the Mercantile Bank, which had only recently opened its first branch in Atlantic Canada.

It was actually a small Canadian subsidiary of Citibank from the USA, and several years later was purchased and integrated by the

onal Bank of Canada. Far from being cautious or timid about the pects for JWBCO, Jean Fournet played a pivotal promotional role ringing the Stairs transaction to reality, with a total financing package approached $3.0 million. Over the years that followed, there have a many nerve-wracking moments for me as the Stairs acquisition idered from time to time, or when general economic conditions riorated sharply, but our Mercantile bankers never let us down. That king relationship continued on with Bird Holdings Ltd., and it was in the closing days of 2010 (thirty-five years later) that the remnants ur original line of credit were paid off in full.

Keeping financial capacity in balance with sales volume is always itical equation for survival. Even more important, of course, is the d to generate profitability at a rate of growth greater than the eases in the bank line, as in the final analysis *cash* is always the most cal factor. I was always extremely mindful of that reality, and worried stantly about the control that our bankers held over our business, ally able to place us in bankruptcy with the stroke of their pens. One g that bankers do not like are surprises, and there is always a danger will overreact if caught off guard and without complete prior wledge. So I have always strived to stay in very close relationships a our bankers, making sure that they get both the good and the bad s before it ever happens. That is what I consider to be risk nagement of the highest order.

In 1965, JWBCO decided the time had come to have its own ehouse and office facilities in Fredericton. This was a new area of ital investment, quite different from the bank financing of inventory accounts receivable with which we had become so familiar. So with ree-acre parcel of land purchased from the city at 440 Wilsey Road, we ered into a contract with Diamond Construction to build a pre-ineered structure of approximately 20,000 square feet, primarily ehouse space but with a two-storey office section on the front. It was incidence that my brother Bob, then a young engineer with Diamond, been assigned the responsibility of managing our project, and he did

a good job. At that time we were able to obtain a mortgage commitment in advance, and as it turned out our construction costs were not very much higher than the mortgage itself, so with the consent of my business partner, Bob Eddy, I decided to finance this real estate in my own name with a view to eventually placing it in a trust for my children.

This resulted in the creation of Bird Holdings Ltd., a company to be owned by my children, while I retained the mandate to direct its operations. Although BHL in 2010 owned a total of eight commercial buildings in Fredericton, plus other properties and land in Bathurst, Moncton and Saint John, it was forty-five years earlier in 1966 that the first new building was leased to JWBCO. From that start, additional warehouses were eventually opened across the whole Atlantic Region, with a second warehouse built on the original property at Wilsey Road. For more than thirty-five years, JWBCO operated from those two warehouses at 420/440 Wilsey Road until moving to even larger premises at 670 Wilsey Road in 2000.

Shortly after we bought the land for the new JWBCO warehouse in 1965, it was rumoured that a meat packing plant and abattoir were going to be built right across the road. That announcement, which would have devastated our new building investment, caused me to become directly involved for the first time in the political process at the municipal level. We fought hard at City Council meetings against the abattoir plan, and eventually won the battle. The meat plant was ultimately constructed well down the road near the Vanier Highway. That first formal involvement in "fighting City Hall" actually sowed the seeds for my later participation in politics.

Chapter 3

J.W. Bird and Company Limited

When JWBCO was started in 1958, the dream and the vision were far-reaching, but the immediate goal was *survival.* With only a $15,000 line of credit as total financing for a speculative start-up journey, making ends meet through the first year would normally have been considered a very satisfying result. That the very first year was profitable, thoughts of future goals became a little more optimistic, and when by the end of our fifth year in 1963, cumulative profits had grown to a total net of more than $100,000, JWBCO had become, at least in my own mind, an unbelievable success. When three years later we achieved a pre-tax profit of $100,000 in a single year, my feelings of security and gratification were profound, accompanied by a growing sense of confidence and excitement about the great potential to be realized over coming years.

Thus, when Canada's Centennial Year arrived, it was quite a sobering shock to encounter our first major setback, with profitability

ɔpping by more than half in a single year. While we were able to make rrections and take the downturns from 1967 in our stride, I did note th caution two diversions from our norms which added to the adverse ults of what had already become a poor business year.

The first was my entry into politics and elected office, having run ccessfully as a City Councillor in June of 1967. Those new public vice activities took large parts of my time and concentration away m business, and so there was bound to be some cost to the company.

The second involved our first major litigation against a supplier, orrow Screw and Nut Co. Ltd. A couple of years earlier we had been ccessful in having Morrow's rock bolts specified for use in the nstruction of the Mactaquac Dam above Fredericton. The sale was a ge one, but when the time came for the contractor to make the rchase, Morrow's owners and representatives sold to our customer rectly, cutting us out of the profitability that we had built into the sale, d leaving us with only a token commission. It was a big decision to go court about such a matter, but we felt that our future status as a stributor depended upon demonstrating that we took our supplier reements seriously. In the end, after some very good work by our wyer Pete Mockler, we achieved a settlement of about $8,000, but not arly enough to cover the time and expense we had incurred in making e sale and conducting the litigation.

There was never any doubt in my mind that JWBCO would come much more than just a sales agency. Encouraged by Drew own, I worked to find strategies early on that would portray the mpany image to be larger and more substantial than it was, and at the me time to provide real service to customers.

Two strategies we developed for these purposes were distribution rough public warehousing, and advertising through product formation manuals as a form of silent sales representation. While the siness grew larger in construction specialty products, so did the mand from customers for faster service and delivery in emergency

situations. Since our finances were always stretched in those growing years, we could not afford to purchase large inventories, and except at Fredericton could not contemplate owning or renting our own warehouses served by our own staff. Upon investigation we found large public warehousing agents such as Maritime Warehousing and Transfer Limited who were able to provide complete warehousing services, including inventory records and controls. They usually dealt in large carload lots, so it required innovation for them to take on our account, with only small quantities of many individual items such as form ties, masonry anchors, coatings and adhesives. The results were very impressive to our customers, not just in the image of size and substance portrayed, but through real and substantial improvement in the time of delivery. Thus, only a few short years after starting up, and with a very limited budget for doing so, we were able to both cast ourselves and to function as a full-fledged distributor across the Atlantic Region, emulating firms which were many times our size.

This strategy of distribution through public warehousing was a major marketing tactic in moving JWBCO from simply being a commission agency to becoming a serious distribution company. These companies, such as F.E. Daniels and Sons Limited in Saint John, were able to receive our inventory, store and record it very precisely, handle all the paperwork (done without computers in those days), ship our orders upon request and provide us with signed delivery slips from the truckers who were taking the goods to the customers. This was really an amazing service, and we were able to provide prompt delivery to our customers while maintaining good stocks in local warehouses under our control. Perpetual inventory records allowed us to ship and replenish almost as efficiently as could be done today.

It is true that the volume was not very large in those years, but it did grow, and eventually we found it efficient to build our own warehouses served by our own staff. That last transition may have been a folly at the time – we never seemed to have quite as good control of our inventory in our own premises as we did when being handled by

professional warehousing managers. As well, of course, the costs of doing it ourselves were far higher at the outset, although we believed that we were on a fast path for growth. There was also a little ego and pride both among managers and employees at the prospect of owning our own facilities.

Our other strategic marketing project, creating product information manuals, was a momentous undertaking for a small group of employees doing the job entirely on our own. The purpose was to have a large beige binder, with BIRD and our logo on the exposed butt edge, displayed on the office bookshelves of every key purchasing agent, project manager, architect and dealer right across the Atlantic Region. That was the advertising part of the concept – to position our name in high profile at the eye level of every major customer, as a constant reminder of where to turn when they needed to buy our products. The service part of the program was to present a collection of all the product literature available from our many suppliers in an organized and indexed fashion, virtually as a mini-library for reference purposes when our customers required product information. In later editions of these manuals, which we continued to produce in at least five separate volumes over the years, general price lists were included.

The organizational challenges for those Bird manuals were immense, because we not only had to design and have the binders themselves produced, but as well needed to assemble up to a hundred pieces of literature from about fifteen separate suppliers to provide the content for each manual. We had to arrange a supply of this literature from each manufacturer, then prepare detailed index sheets and tabs for each of the binders, receive and collate all of these separate pieces into individual package sets, place them in the binders and finally, when price lists were involved, add them as the last measure. It was my job to calculate the cost and selling prices before the lists could be printed. The assembly of all the various pieces was a mammoth job, and we frequently rented large hotel meeting rooms with long tables to provide physical space for the assembly process.

In today's computer world, the production of those catalogue would obviously have been more simple and efficient, but because the represented such an important marketing instrument for our relativel new business, we felt it was necessary to get them exactly right, and the had to be handcrafted. The results were immediately successful an impressive. We soon began to see evidence of more enquiries and orde from existing customers, as well as many new customers, which we coul trace directly to that "silent salesman" which the manual represented i every customer's office.

The financial costs of these publications was relatively modes because all of the literature was supplied free by our manufacturers, bu the cost of time and effort was extremely high at the employee leve including my own, and especially when doing it the first time. Th marketing tactic however turned out to be good strategic planning an helped to set the foundations for success by JWBCO. Even today, mo than four decades later, some of those original catalogues are still to b found in architectural offices and other such places around Atlant Canada. Those Bird manuals were but one example of the need fc innovative thinking, and tremendous extra effort, which an entrepreneurial entity must put forth to establish a market position.

A major advance was made to the scope of our business when w were introduced to the Metalbestos Chimney, which was a factory-bui (pre-fabricated) stainless steel chimney to replace stove pipes and t improve on old masonry flues. The concept of pre-fab chimneys had bee on the market for a long time, but Metalbestos offered, literally, a ne twist. It was a much easier installation than any others, with the sectio of pipe turning and locking together much like putting the top on a jar pickles. I distinctly remember reading an early advertisement for th product while waiting to see the purchasing agent at Sumner's in Moncto one day. I tore the page from the magazine, and wrote the company th evening. It was not long until I received a call from R.A. (Richie) War who was the general manager for Metalbestos in Canada. It was th beginning of a long and profitable relationship, and a strong friendshi

After a few brief discussions, Richie was prepared to give BCO the exclusive distribution of the Metalbestos Chimney for all of Maritimes, but he insisted that we purchase a full carload of entory as an opening condition. That was a mind-boggling position involving an extreme quantity for the existing market, and urchase cost of about $15,000 which would really be putting a strain our financial circumstances. As well, it would change the volume and pe of our public warehousing business with Daniels at Saint John to east a four-fold extent, so I argued strenuously for some form of an ncy deal or at least a consignment arrangement where the financing he inventory would remain with the supplier. All of this was to no il, because Richie Ward stubbornly demanded that if we wanted to in the chimney business we had to start by putting a carload of entory in stock to demonstrate our willingness to serve the market.

Reluctantly, we did so. Only a few days after that first carload ived, the Daniels warehouse burned to the ground. This event ocked me, as I had initial fears that our insurance would not cover the s. When I phoned Richie Ward to tell him the news and express my ncerns, he was very pleased and excited at the prospect of shipping us eplacement carload immediately. He saw the fire as a windfall sale of mneys.

After I had gathered my composure, and became assured that r insurance coverage was adequate, we did repeat the carload order d I started sales trips around the country calling on building supply alers to introduce the Metalbestos Chimney. The technique was to rsuade each dealer to invest $100 in a framed chimney display, which uld sit in their showrooms, or even outside in their yards, to attract stomer attention. This would allow the unique twist-lock features of e Metalbestos Chimney to be discovered for its ease of installation by dinary carpenters, as opposed to special chimney installers, and the arket would begin to develop. The JWBCO business in chimneys entually grew to many carloads each year, with sales volume becoming ll in excess of $1 million annually. That chimney product line also put

us in regular contact with building supply dealers, as opposed merely to contractors, which eventually led to a much broader diversification of our sales to the building materials industry in Atlantic Canada.

Richie Ward was a knowledgeable and enthusiastic engineer and salesman, with a strong will about how things should be done, but always willing to listen and to work closely together. He helped to push us in directions that seemed too ambitious even for me at the time, and he helped to bring us great success directly with his product line, and indirectly through his good judgement and advice, which added to our maturity as a marketing company. He was a gregarious and enjoyable person to be with, and I recall the many hours we drove together through the Maritimes, looking at every house we passed for pre-fab chimney installations. We started calling ourselves "the chimney peepers club".

Eventually, the Metalbestos Chimney business in Canada was purchased by the Selkirk organization, one of the original manufacturers of the outmoded unassembled chimney, and they immediately copied Metalbestos in all of their production. The line was left with us by Selkirk for regular distribution, but they commenced a second marketing program through all of their original direct salesmen. Over a very few subsequent years, the marketing approach began to fragment in several directions, and that unique distribution opportunity which Metalbestos presented to us in the beginning was soon over. That relationship marked the best, and yet the last, *dealer program* in which JWBCO had been involved.

Perhaps of all my responsibilities in managing JWBCO, the most important one was the constant search for new product lines on which to build our market positions. This process took many forms in keeping abreast of market developments, including a keen knowledge of competitive activities. I tried to read all of the good construction trade magazines, especially the new advertisements, and to follow up by letter or phone on every interesting prospect in an effort to add to our product mix. There were a number of trade shows each year, but by far the most important one was the World of Concrete held in various locations

throughout the USA each winter. That show was very specifically linked to the construction specialties sector, and was the source for many of our best supplier contacts. Eventually, we joined a group of fellow specialty distributors across North America, called Associated Construction Distributors International (ACDI), which further enhanced and sustained our knowledge and awareness of new product developments, and kept us firmly as the leader in our own markets.

Particularly in the specialty sector of construction products, one opportunity would frequently lead to another, some of them significant catalysts to future growth. I clearly remember the day when a local contractor called to find out where he could obtain "neoprene bridge bearing pads." I quickly got on the telephone with the many contacts I had in my directory by that time, and eventually we introduced ourselves to the General Tire Corporation in Wabash, Indiana, where they manufactured a very sophisticated line of engineered bridge bearing products and were developing the new Transflex bridge expansion joint. Up to that point, General Tire had not much bothered to market their products in Canada, so we quickly garnered their interest with some orders already in our hands, and decided to make the audacious request, "could we represent you for Canada?" This was the first time that my vision dared expand beyond the Atlantic Region, but I sensed that in General Tire we had found a vehicle that could make that possible. To my amazement and excitement, General Tire said "Yes, we would like to work with you."

In marketing terms, and in contrast to the distribution of Metalbestos Chimneys, the introduction of JWBCO to General Tire and its industrial rubber division led us to a long term selling process generally referred to as *specification sales*, primarily to engineers and architects. As opposed to chimneys and most building materials, which are normally packaged and carried in warehouse stock for immediate sale, specification products such as bridge bearings and Transflex expansion joint are sold long in advance by convincing designers to include these specialties in their original plans, and to specify them by name in their prescribed lists of materials. Frequently, both with

engineers designing bridges and architects designing buildings, tl important sales work has to be done many months, even years, before tl projects are tendered for construction. Once the product is specified, in the Morrow and Mactaquac Dam example, it then is essential to follo up on development to ensure that competitors do not introdu substitutes, and to provide the contractors with price quotations as th prepare their bids. Eventually, if all goes well, a purchase order is receiv from the successful contractor when the time comes to install tl specified products in the structure. Sometimes it would be as long as fi years from the time of introducing Transflex to the design engineer un it was actually installed on a new bridge deck.

Because the sale of engineered and architectural products offer very high profit margins, and because the sales were being made direct to the designers and the contractors, these were highly desirab components for JWBCO's construction specialties business. The k marketing technique, of course, was to find such proprietary produc and their manufacturers, and to gain exclusive sales rights to then before they were discovered by competitors. In the case of General Tir and the opportunity to represent them in Canada, it was a case of goo timing and good fortune which came our way because we ha established that special reputation as the "go to" company in the Atlant Region when a new or unfamiliar construction product was required.

In May of 1965, on the basis of the General Tire relationship, new national division of JWBCO was established, Bird Bridge Specialti Limited. We employed a well qualified sales engineer in Toronto, Bi Laari, to lead our introduction to the bridge engineering offices acro Canada, and he worked very hard and well, making multiple calls in a provincial capitals where most bridge design and construction w happening. A lot of my own time was spent flying across the country t help the new division in getting started.

For the next few years, Bird Bridge was marginally profitabl and we continued to invest in its potential growth for the future. Becaus it was specification selling, with a long lag between promoting the sal

d invoicing it, we accepted the fact that there might be some early ises in starting up this new operation. However, with Bill Laari's good orts, by the end of its second year (1966) Bird Bridge had a pre-tax ofit of more than $15,000. It looked like a promising future for this w national division of the JWBCO business.

We felt we were well on the way and had a head start on most of r likely competitors, because Transflex was such an exciting new ncept in bridge expansion joint design. Representation was added at ontreal in the person of Jules Roleau, and Jeff Firth was hired in ncouver. Eventually we also transferred two Fredericton employees, in Tees to Toronto and Raoul Moulinie to Montreal, as replacements original representatives who had decided for various reasons to move . To try and bolster our small national company, we also acquired nership of a long established specialties agency in Toronto and ontreal called J.E. Goodman Sales Limited, and merged those erations under the new name, Bird-Goodco Inc.

We continued with our best efforts, but the introduction and sale Transflex and General Tire bridge bearings was a slow and arduous ocess. It was not long before competition and new technology arrived on the scene for bridge expansion joints. Regrettably, General Tire emed unable or unwilling to keep pace. They did not invest in the oduct development work necessary to improve their Transflex model as to maintain its technical and competitive advantages. The high pes we had for Transflex, upon which our aspirations to become a tional distributor were largely based at the time, began to fade rapidly new designs from other companies became more appealing to bridge gineers, and we were unable to find suitable substitutes to remain mpetitive. The Bird-Goodco operation, which had held such great omise and potential, was becoming a serious worry as sales were slow developing and selling costs continued to escalate. The business was arting to lose money, with risks expanding and returns diminishing.

Ultimately, we decided to close Bird-Goodco and sold its assets some of the people who had been employed with us. Perhaps that was

another case in my life where a little more patience might have proved highly successful; but I have always been guided by the elements of risk and survival in any downturn, so I felt then that discretion was the better part of valour. The marketing relationship between General Tire and JWBCO endured for several more years within the Atlantic Region, and their representative, Bill Fleshood, remains a friend to this day. While we never did realize the tremendous potential that General Tire seemed to offer us at the beginning, it certainly was not for lack of effort and support by many of our employees. If that company had recognized the technical advances being made by competitive manufacturers and moved quickly to make Transflex an even better product, then I have no doubt we could have persevered to become a viable national distributor.

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At the beginning of 1969, JWBCO was reorganized much as a holding company, with four operating divisions. The purpose of this major reorganization was to provide a specific focus to the respective product groups and territories, each with their own manager holding an incentive share interest in the ownership. An even larger motive was to free myself at JWBCO from day-to-day management responsibilities. I was not only intending then to run for office as Mayor of Fredericton, but also in those years was raising four children on my own, albeit with very good household help, and wanted to ensure they remained my top priority.

We were fortunate to have a good team of dedicated people at that time: Ray McGee as general manager of JWBCO; Brian Baxter in New Brunswick and Ralph Whitehead in Nova Scotia as managers of construction products; Alec McLeod as manager of hardware specialties; Barry Tomilson at Bird Bridge; the secretary-treasurer of JWBCO was Geoff Munn; the service managers were John McDougall in New Brunswick and Eddie Bishop in Nova Scotia. There was a comprehensive advertising announcement of these changes as a centerfold in the Atlantic Advocate, a leading business magazine at the time. In our tenth full year in business, this was intended to be a big breakout through stronger

employee participation in the ownership along with decentralized operations of major business units. Regrettably, this structure proved to be unduly complicated over the next few years, and some units did not produce the positive results that were anticipated.

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When we finished our tenth full year of operation in December of 1968, JWBCO had become quite a successful business by any measure, especially considering its modest beginnings. We had survived change and competition, and had become by far the most prominent construction specialties company in the Atlantic Region.

We were in very good shape and ready for the next step, which was not long in coming. Within a couple of years of building our new Fredericton warehouse, and shortly after being elected as a City Councillor, I was approached by Gordon Neill who asked if we would be interested in purchasing the business of Neill's Wholesale Limited, which was at that time our very best customer. The company was the successor to James S. Neill and Sons Limited, which had been in business in Fredericton for a hundred years or more, and enjoyed a large share of the wholesale and retail market throughout central New Brunswick for hardware, tools, building materials, plumbing and electrical supplies. The business opportunity to acquire Neill's came as the result of a very close customer relationship with that company and its people. Having the base of our business in Fredericton, it was natural that our market penetration there was very deep, and we had strong contacts with most of the customers, both dealers and contractors. From the beginning, JWBCO was helped greatly by Bert Edney and other Neill's employees who wished us well, so that firm continued to be our most important single account.

Therefore, it was more than interesting when Gordon invited me to a meeting where he introduced the possible sale of his company to JWBCO. This came somewhat as a surprise, because I had always felt he regarded me as an upstart from the other side of the social tracks. We

began to talk, and it slowly emerged that he realized selling his old wholesale business would not be easy. He clearly was prepared to accep deal that would allow recovery of the value of its assets with nothi required for goodwill, not even a demand to continue renting its buildin

I was excited by the prospect of taking over one of the most histo businesses in the Fredericton area. It was one that had a good sales volu in general hardware and building supplies, both at the wholesale and ret levels, and was a contractor supply business with high potential. Aft consultation with Bob Eddy, we devised a plan to purchase only the asse and to do so with payment over a reasonable time, and with one oth critical point – that the inventory and all other major assets would evaluated by an independent party on the basis of their current fair mark value. Eventually, Gordon Neill agreed to these conditions. This large a exciting transaction was brought to a close on June 21, 1969. That was t same day I was sworn in as Mayor of Fredericton.

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Once the purchase of Neill's had closed, Bert Edney worked wi us for a few months but eventually retired. I remember him well wi gratitude, and feel badly that my many activities at that time did n allow me to keep in touch as much as should have been the case. He lat became ill and eventually passed away. A boyhood friend, Wiff Mil became deeply attached to Bert and Gladys in their older years, and looked after each one of them through the final days of their lives though they were his own parents.

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The next challenge was to manage the integration of Neil business into our own. We decided to adopt the trade name Bird-Nei strictly for usage within New Brunswick, because the Neill name ha virtually no impact in the Nova Scotia or Newfoundland markets. well, we had to determine which elements of the Neill business were st profitable, and which should be closed. To accomplish that, we creat a dealer division, with Alec McLeod as sales manager serving both t

rd and Neill product lines. Customers were primarily located in the ral areas around Fredericton and up the St. John River valley. The ıer parts of the business – building products, plumbing, heating and :ctrical supplies – were for the most part marketed directly to ntractors and consumers. Thus, we felt the other significant change eded was to establish a plumbing and electrical division, with Glen arkson of Neill's as its manager.

This was the first time that JWBCO had become broadly volved in a range of products that spanned the whole construction dustry - from construction specialties, to building supplies, to general rdware, to plumbing and electrical supplies. It was now a large and mplicated package we were selling, which needed qualified anagement at every level of activity – purchasing, costing, inventory ntrol, pricing, marketing and selling.

The purchase of Neill's Wholesale proved to be a great success, and :er expanding and renovating our warehousing facilities we moved the ıole operation to 440 Wilsey Road. The sale of building materials, umbing equipment and electrical supplies, on both a contractor and nsumer basis, had become a big part of our business in the Fredericton ea, and it was a profitable one. The integration of Neill's virtually doubled VBCO's sales volume, and set us off in several new directions. Because e Neill's market penetration had been primarily in Fredericton and up e St. John River, and because the true wholesale function of its operations ıd diminished significantly over previous years, a major impact of this :w acquisition for JWBCO was in the immediate Fredericton area, where : inherited deep roots into the local construction markets.

We decided to concentrate our Fredericton operations to directly rve contractors and large consumers on a commodity basis, a sort of ımbined wholesale and retail approach that is sometimes referred to as vholetail". In fact, we coined a new marketing label "The Contractors' ore" to re-describe our business. That overall new initiative with Neill's as very successful from the start, bringing us much increased sales and :ofits, not to mention many more employees and all the related

management challenges. What it also brought us – because of the manner of purchasing only assets and obtaining extended terms of payment – was a big boost to our financial working capital.

We were starting our second decade with great momentum and optimism. My personal vision was that those next ten years would become the golden years for JWBCO. We had a great team of people, including some good new employees from Neill's; we had a strong construction specialties business around the whole Atlantic Region; we had our own warehousing operations at five locations; we had the best lines in the business under our control; and now, at our home base in Fredericton, we had just acquired through Neill's a very significant new dimension of sales growth in the direct-to-contractor commodity market. The future looked very promising.

In reality, since the purchase of Neill's Wholesale in 1969, JWBCO had become almost two separate businesses – proprietary construction specialties, and commodity products such as plumbing, electrical and building supplies. As was the original plan, these two separate dimensions of the business are complementary because, while the one provides a distinctive and unique marketing exposure to special product lines, the other offers a broad commodity range to serve the everyday requirements of both contractors and consumers, thus having a combination of marketing services that is unique and unmatched by any competitor in the Atlantic construction industry. That is the corporate image which JWBCO builds on – a place to go for special construction products which you are not liable to find elsewhere, at the same time being able to obtain a wide range of commodity construction supplies for both residential and commercial application at competitive wholesale prices. That still proves to be a winning combination.

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With the purchase of the Neill business and my new role as Mayor of Fredericton, the early 1970's were very busy years. My involvement in the management of JWBCO diminished, and was taken over principally

by Ray McGee as general manager, and others with him such as Geoff Munn, Reg McGee and George Peppin in New Brunswick, Ian McInnes in Nova Scotia, and Launce Burdock in Newfoundland. A new individual, Harry Rumble, had been recommended to us by Bob Eddy from his MBA graduating class at the University of Western Ontario, and Harry became our marketing manager located in Fredericton.

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As I look back, those *were* the golden years for the company. It was still relatively young and growing steadily, with a great group of people involved, all of whom were dedicated to the business. In those days the future looked very bright indeed, and that period was one of the most satisfying of my entire life.

Chapter 4

City Hall

As with many people, my first involvement in community servic started by joining in neighbourhood efforts to add and improve loc facilities for recreational or cultural activities. It was during the earl 1960's, after starting my business and moving back to the Fredericto area, that I helped initiate development of the Nashwaaksis Recreatio Council, along with neighbours such as Frank MacLoon who later led for years. At that time Nashwaaksis was still a village, and yet with th beginnings of construction at Fulton Heights and similar residenti developments in the area, it was fast developing as a major communit with a large number of young families.

The concept of the Nashwaaksis Recreation Council was ahead c its time but quickly developed as a lasting force in Nashwaaksis, startin with a Little League ballpark on the Royal Road just above the ston bridge. After my time, the Recreation Council provided the impetus fo construction of an indoor hockey arena, which became the nucleus fo

ıture recreational activity in that growing community. More than that, ıe Recreation Council became the catalyst for a strong spirit of ɔmmunity service which set Nashwaaksis apart from most places of milar size in the province. It was not too long before the new Louis obichaud government and its Minister of Recreation and Youth, the te Hon. Bill Duffy, adopted the concept of recreation councils, and ɔrmalized it among several smaller municipalities throughout New runswick.

I remember how elated we all felt with the realization that ithout a great deal of formal organization or money, but simply by king a good idea and working hard at it together, something new and ɔnstructive could be created that would last. That, of course, is the ideal ısis for political motivation, and there is not much doubt the ashwaaksis Recreation Council gave me my first taste of the enjoyment ıd satisfaction that community service can bring. We had made a fference, it felt good and this was a role in my life that I was determined ould continue.

A few years later I joined the Fredericton Kiwanis Club, working ı a variety of service projects with many men who became lifelong iends. Eventually it was my turn to become president of the club, which as a one-year revolving responsibility for every member, and I member the good feeling of assuming leadership and having the ıance to point the group in directions that I felt were important. I also member learning quickly how crucial it was to have plenty of support nong fellow members for any new ideas if I ever wanted to get them ıplemented. So again, my Kiwanis experience like the Nashwaaksis ecreation Council helped to shape and inspire an active interest in aying a lead role to assist and serve the community around me.

I have come to believe that an important part of life for any ɛrson is to actively seek out opportunities to volunteer time and talents ı behalf of one's community and fellow citizens. It is not only necessary ɔ making the world more like we want it to be – because governments ın't do everything and sometimes can't do anything as well as people

themselves – but it is also a fact that such service fills a human need for expressing ourselves and demonstrating that we all have something to offer. Deep down, we all want the world to know that we are alive, and we want to know it for ourselves too. Stepping up to help others, stepping out to work with others, are ways of making our lives count a little bit, and that brings an inner sense of fulfillment. What is more, it generates energy and inspiration to continue on, and to do more.

After completing my term as president of the Kiwanis Club, my close friend, the late Ken Bartlett, came to see me at home one evening in early 1967 and, in his usual clear and straight talking way, said "Bud, I think you should run for City Council. It is an important way for you to continue your service to the community, and the City Council needs some business experience."

That was the first time I had ever thought seriously about seeking elected public office, although it had passed through my mind earlier during the debate about the abattoir in the industrial park. The way that Ken Bartlett put it sounded more like an obligation than an opportunity. After a few days of thought, I offered to stand for election as a councillor in the ward in which we lived. There were two sitting councillors from that ward at the time, Louis Seheult and Les Brewer, both older men who had been there a long time and served well. The election process would select two of us to continue representing our ward.

When I first thought of seeking a seat on City Council, one of the people I approached for feedback was Brigadier Michael Wardell, the fearsome publisher of *The Daily Gleaner* who had been brought to Canada from England by Lord Beaverbrook, and he wasted no time in asking me some blunt questions: "Why are you running? What have you got to offer? What is your platform?" While I had thought about these questions in a general way, my mind was racing for clear and concise answers when confronted by this powerful personality, whose newspaper would chronicle my every word and deed, and hold me accountable for fulfilling my commitments. The need for amalgamation of Greater Fredericton was one of the first thoughts to come to mind, followed

closely by the need for urban renewal in the downtown area, and a new bridge to replace the hopelessly overloaded one at Carleton Street. This seemed to satisfy Wardell that I was a credible candidate, and while he did not endorse me neither did he oppose my candidacy, which I felt was a victory. That brief confrontation also reminded me that running for public office was not to be taken lightly, because serious people were expecting serious intentions and responsible results.

In my brief campaign for Council, I had tried to convey through only a couple of newspaper ads that I had a good general understanding of the goals and challenges facing the city, and that I was offering new energy, fresh thought and free expression to help address those issues. To my pleasant surprise I was elected, finishing first in the three-way race for our ward.

That political initiative was the beginning of a lasting and satisfying diversion to my business life, and these two different careers have been intertwined ever since. For the first time, I experienced the elation and satisfaction at being elected by the community for public office. It is one thing to have your friends and family support you for the leadership of a service club, but the satisfaction is even deeper when that support is expressed by a lot of people you don't know, who are giving you their support based on your reputation and also upon their expectations and trust that you will do a good job for them. So with the real pleasure of winning any election contest also comes the sense of responsibility and obligation that the mandate carries with it. The latter is a far more important emotion than the former.

In June, 1967, I took my first seat in elected office at Fredericton City Council, where the Mayor of the day was William T. Walker, a gruff but affable older man who owned and managed a clothing store on Queen Street. He had been the Mayor for more than twelve years, and obviously loved the job. It quickly became apparent to me that his main objective was to stay in office indefinitely, and so his leadership style was to maintain an even keel and not take any chances. By contrast, I felt the city had some very serious needs that had to be addressed boldly. I felt strongly that

Fredericton, then about twenty-five thousand citizens, should b amalgamated with the surrounding municipalities of Nashwaaksi Marysville, Barkers Point, Lincoln, Silverwood and New Maryland, wit their total population being another twenty-five thousand people.

We also needed to continue pursuing the cause of urban renewa because suburban shopping malls were drawing people to the out boundaries and the central business district was becoming seriously ru down, both physically and economically. There was the pressing nee for a new bridge to replace the old structure at Carleton Street, relatively narrow two lanes causing major traffic delays every mornir and evening. The riverfront on both the north and south sides was mess of unattended weed trees and the rear-ends of old buildings, whi our beautiful river resource ran by the city with hardly any notice at a The Victoria Public Hospital was inadequate, but no progress had bee made towards a new hospital. The old George Street High School w still serving the entire Greater Fredericton area. Issues of bilingualis and biculturalism in the capital city of New Brunswick had not y emerged, but were simmering just below the surface. There was a gre deal to be done at City Hall.

An urban renewal by-law was passed in the summer of 1967. was opposed to it because of the lack of scope, designating only o downtown city block as an urban renewal area, when in fact there we at least ten or twelve blocks that would ultimately need to be redevelope over time. In my view there was a need for comprehensive planning, a I tried very hard but unsuccessfully to make that point while the issu was being debated. The block which had been designated, on which Kin Place now stands, was then being proposed for development by a grou from Montreal called Cameron Grant Argo, and included the concept a new City Hall as part of its design and construction. Given the sa physical condition of the old premises at that time, this seemed like good idea and provided an incentive for developers to consider. In fair short order, another proposal developed from a local group headed b businessman Paul Lynch for redevelopment of the Phoenix Squa

operty, with or without retention of the City Hall. All of a sudden there ere alternatives to be considered, and the debate raged on for many onths. Despite all the talk, no progress on urban renewal was made ıring those two years at all.

On the matter of amalgamation, a new committee was formed which I was elected chairman, providing me the opportunity to play ead role as I wanted to do in this important direction. The need for a w bridge was a compelling priority, and it was hard to see ıalgamation taking place until at least planning commitments for a w bridge had been made. Some months previously, a joint technical mmittee of the four Fredericton area communities and the provincial vernment had recommended a $30 million, six-lane bridge for York eet. However, the government was giving little encouragement to the ntual construction of such a system.

Early in January of 1969, I decided to dramatize the need for the w bridge. Without notice at a council meeting, I put forth a motion ıat this council go on record as favouring the toll concept of financing bridge if necessary to build the structure." According to *Telegraph-rnal* clippings from that time, there was a raging debate for more than ıalf-hour, but in the end the motion was passed unanimously. In senting my motion, I described the bridge as being, "undoubtedly the st important single element in the eventual restoration of downtown dericton," and I went on to say, "While the $30 million quotation is impossible figure for the tax base of a community our size, the bridge ne proposition where we can do something to help ourselves, even ugh it should be unnecessary, even though it is a terrible nuisance, l even though it is just plain unfair . . . we can take the matter into own hands by paying for it on a toll system." As the only one aking against the motion, Mayor Walker said that I was "producing ate of confusion and, since it was the responsibility of the government ay for the bridge, it was a little premature to mention tolls." While iously nothing came of the motion, it did help to bring the bridge d into sharper focus.

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It is now interesting to observe that years later in 1998, the Frank McKenna government introduced tolls as the means to accelerate construction of the vitally needed four-lane highway between Fredericton and Moncton. Even though those tolls never materialized – somewhat sadly in my view, because I believe that the user-pay concept is the best long term way to sustain our highway infrastructure – nevertheless I do find it gratifying that I had raised that concept in public session at City Council more than thirty years earlier, even though considered somewhat "off the wall" at that time. Today such thoughts are encouraged as "outside the box" thinking.

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Increasingly I had become frustrated and impatient with the slow pace of change in addressing some of the major issues, and strongly felt the need for a new sense of vision to be established at City Hall. I found it difficult to reach a consensus of views with Mayor Walker, and no doubt he saw me somewhat as a torment. By the end of my first year, I had made up my mind that I would challenge him for the Mayor's job in the next municipal election, to take place on June 21, 1969. About one year in advance of that date, I began to lay my campaign plans and to build my campaign team. Our company lawyer at the time, the tough and smart Pete Mockler, became my campaign manager and we worked well together at recruiting people to our side and building a large team for election day.

The campaign to become the Mayor of Fredericton was one of the most exciting adventures of my life. From the outset, we realized that Mayor Walker would be a difficult opponent, and that we would have to create momentum for a relative newcomer to defeat him. Recognizing that municipal politics in New Brunswick was not generally based along partisan lines, I made an early commitment to both Liberal and Conservative supporters that I would remain uncommitted to any political party. If elected, I would practice independence as the Mayor of the capital city in order to obtain the greatest possible support from

provincial and federal governments, regardless of what political party they might come from at any given time.

This proved to be a difficult obstacle while building for the campaign, because one of the most important people we needed on our side was Dr. G. Everett Chalmers, who was the local MLA for the PC Party, and probably the most respected and well-liked doctor and politician the city of Fredericton ever had. When I approached him early in the planning stage, he gave me his usual gruff response, "If you're a Conservative, I will support you, but there's no damn way I am going to have a young Liberal as Mayor waiting to take my job at the next provincial election!"

I explained the non-partisan commitment I had made to all of my supporters, and tried to persuade him that it was the right position for a Mayor to take. He was having none of that theory, and flatly refused to get involved. For many months, I would drop by his office every so often to stay in contact, and each time he would say, "Are you a Conservative or not?" to which I always replied that my position was totally independent and uncommitted. Finally, as the election date drew near, I went down to his office at the medical clinic one Saturday afternoon where he was almost always working, and asked him if we could have one last long talk.

He made me wait for almost an hour while he looked after some patients, then he called me in and said, "So you finally have come to tell me you're a Conservative, and you need my help?" Again I replied, "No, Dr. Chalmers, I can't tell you that I am a Conservative for all the reasons I have described before, but I do badly need your help. What I will promise you is that, if and when I ever choose to join a political party, you will be the first to know, and that is a commitment I will keep to you!" With that, he had a big laugh and replied, "You do need me, and I have intended to help you all along. Besides, I know your father and mother well, and they've always been good Conservatives!"

So Dr. Chalmers joined our team, and on election day he spent the entire afternoon and evening on the steps of the Devon School,

which was Mayor Walker's home ward, greeting every voter as they arrived and telling them plainly to vote for me. In the end, he won the election for us, because our margin of victory was only about five hundred votes, and I feel sure that he turned far more than that number our way with his hours of work at Devon School on election day.

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For this campaign we had designed a small lapel button with the words "Be a Bud Bird Booster." I know some of our campaign workers still have them as souvenirs, because they were distributed by the hundreds all over the city. I was told that one little girl asked her father, "What is a Bud Bird?"

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There was great satisfaction at winning what was a truly wonderful campaign effort. It taught me clearly how important it is to have a good team of people supporting you, and also how vital it is that they believe and trust in what you are trying to accomplish. Even then, however, it was sobering to realize how close the vote results were, and to accept the realization that almost as many people voted against me as voted for me. The public is not easily persuaded in any one direction, so it is important to convey a message of service, and even more important to deliver that service when you are given the chance to do so.

It is always tempting to concentrate on the question, "How can I win?", but I have come to believe it is vastly more important to concentrate on the question "How can I serve?". That may sound a little naive and idealistic, but I truly believe that when you concentrate only on winning, you will end up trying to please everybody and risk not pleasing anybody. Even worse, when you concentrate only on winning, your decisions tend to be shaped to what will sell as opposed to what is needed, and you risk compromising your principles and your reputation. It is far easier to concentrate on doing what you believe to be right, hoping that people will support you on the basis of your judgement and ability, and knowing in the end you have been true to

ur own obligation to serve as well as you can. There is a saying I have ard or read, one which I have used many times and do truly believe, t is better to be defeated for the right reasons, than elected for the rong ones."

As much as possible in the years since then I have tried to follow at principle, not only in election campaigns but also in the rformance of my duties as an elected representative in any office. bviously, we all try to serve our citizens in ways that will please them, id to follow the mandates that we have been given. However, there is equently a fine line to be drawn among decisions and priorities, pecially in partisan politics, and so quite frequently one needs to ercise judgement that may not be popular but is right under the rcumstances. I believe elected representatives get high marks when ey do this, even among those who disagree with their position but spect their resolve to take a stand.

And of course in party politics, with which I became deeply volved in later years, (and which is really not as much fun for the dividual as being on City Council), the partisan pressures cause you to equently go with the crowd because of the need for consensus. In rtisan politics, the caucus is the vehicle through which you must complish your objectives, so there is a great need for give and take in der to move your own agenda forward. At some point, however, there e always issues of principle where strong positions must be taken, and at is the most difficult political test of all, when one feels compelled to and apart from the party caucus. That is a rare situation, which requires l the resolve and judgement one can muster, because if you lose your ace in caucus you are really losing your ability to effectively serve your nstituents. In that kind of situation, one must concentrate first of all on anging the views of the caucus and the party from within, because ere really is no place for an independent to be very effective in the rtisan system of politics. The same is not true of course in municipal olitics in New Brunswick where council members are independent and ot aligned with parties.

We had many people from both political parties on our municipal campaign team in 1969, but probably the vast majority were average citizens, independent and uncommitted, with some of them being in the first political campaign of their lives. It was a satisfying and inspiring experience for almost all the five hundred people who were working with us, and our victory was considered a tremendous political upset. Not many people believed that, "this young fellow Bud Bird could ever defeat the old pro Bill Walker." Indeed, he did prove to be a very tough man to beat.

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In the summer of 1969, it seemed as if everything was coming together for good. Our business was going well and we had just purchased the Neill firm. On the same day as that transaction closed, I was sworn into office as the Mayor of Fredericton. It had not been an altogether smooth road to get to this point. While I have acknowledged there was much success and satisfaction for me during the early years of creating my company, I sincerely regret to say that my family paid a high price for my absence from home and for the stresses that were imposed by the pressures of business and politics. Although I always strived to be a good provider to my family, I did not share much of myself as a husband and a father.

About five years after JWBCO had been started, my wife Marilyn decided we should separate, and we were soon divorced. I insisted upon and accepted the difficult challenge of raising four children on my own. In the next six years, through a succession of some very good housekeepers, we somehow kept our family together. In many ways, I look back on those memorable years with deep pride and nostalgia, in the sense that I was probably closer then to my children than at any other time.

Shortly after I became Mayor in 1969, my good friend Dr. Jack MacKay, introduced me to his sister-in-law, Peggy Lawson Huet, who was a school nurse in Montreal, and the widow of an air force officer,

Captain Kaye Huet, killed on duty some years previously. She was the younger sister of Barbara MacKay, both daughters from the large family of Colonel Walter Lawson and his wife Mary (Kearney) Lawson of Minto. After a brief courtship conducted between Fredericton and Montreal, we were married on December 27, 1969, and merged our two families. My own four children were the slightly older of the group, Cathy was sixteen, Stephen fourteen, Nancy twelve and Bill ten; Peggy's three children followed in order of age with Mickey also ten, Karen seven, and Margot six. Putting these two families together was a tremendous challenge, especially for Peggy, and time has proved that she did it well. There were many conflicts and some temporary setbacks along the way, many of them due to my continuing involvement in business and politics, and to the stresses that flowed from those activities.

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My tenure as Mayor of Fredericton over five years and three elections was unquestionably one of the most rewarding periods of my life in terms of satisfaction in getting things done and feeling that I was making an important contribution to life in the community around me. It was not all a bed of roses, of course, and I learned some very important lessons about the practice of public politics very early in my term.

My first big error sprang from the view that City Council activities were too political among individual councillors, with many of them playing their views to the media, having one opinion privately and a different one publicly. It was my recommendation that we should start to hold private sessions, which were called committee-of-the-whole, where sensitive issues such as finances and personnel relations could be discussed in an objective and constructive way without media presence. Little did I realize at that time how strongly the press believed in a totally open political process, and none more so than Brigadier Wardell. These private sessions were immediately termed to be "secret meetings" by Brigadier Wardell that were contrary to his vision of democracy, and I became the subject of intense criticism in the newspaper almost every

day. That criticism shocked me, especially in the form of one particular cartoon depicting me as dishonestly hiding facts from the public.

Finally and thankfully, after several weeks I came to the conclusion that diplomacy was the only way out, so I called Brigadier Wardell and we met at his home along the Nashwaak River one Sunday afternoon. He smiled as he welcomed me, knowing that I had decided to find a way to end the impasse. It was more of a lecture than a conversation, with him telling me in no uncertain terms how he felt about private City Council meetings. He acknowledged that it would be difficult for me to back down, but he did persuade me that in the long run the best way to practice politics was in an open and transparent manner, regardless of how difficult that might sometimes make it to reach good decisions in a businesslike fashion. I came to the conclusion that his was the better way, and I have favoured as much transparency as possible ever since.

During the next few weeks, the so-called secret meetings faded away, and from that point forward any and every meeting of City Council was open to the media, except where there were real needs for confidentiality about employment arrangements or financial matters that were still being negotiated. Even in those cases, we invited the media to listen in, but to do so on an honour-system basis in order to protect the required confidentiality. That lesson from Brigadier Wardell was probably one of the most important lessons of my political career. Accepting that politics is different than business with respect to transparency, there is only one way to deal with public responsibility and with the media, and that is straight up and straight out. It has always been my practice since that time to develop positive media relationships, to provide context and background in advance, and to trust the judgement of reporters and editors to act with journalistic integrity. Seldom have I ever found that approach to fail, and far more often than not the media have been my allies and not my enemies. In fact, when I was serving as a Member of Parliament twenty years later, I went out of my way to hold Saturday morning coffee chats with Tom Crowther who was then the publisher of

he Daily Gleaner. That approach served me very well. Even when we greed to disagree, it was always a constructive process.

My advice to any aspiring politician would be to practice your olitical affairs as though your actions were going to be reported on page ne tomorrow, as they very well could be. That does not mean that you eed to curry the favour of the press, because they will recognize that id disrespect you for it, but rather be prepared to tell them honestly hat is going on, or if you are dealing with a confidential issue tell them) and tell them why. That is the surprising element of all this: the media ill generally respect a confidence from someone they trust, but they ill fight vigorously against any policy or practice that is based on a eneral principle of privacy.

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About the middle of my first term as Mayor, while the provincial overnment of Louis J. Robichaud was still in power, I proposed to City ouncil one evening that we start a public campaign for a new hospital. or many years it had been recognized that the existing Victoria Public ospital was sorely outdated and inadequate for the needs of our mmunity. One of the leading champions for a new facility was Dr. G. verett Chalmers, who was then a sitting MLA for Fredericton and a erce enemy of the Liberal government. Since it was his support that elped me get elected to the Mayor's office, there was a natural alliance fight together for a new health centre in the capital city. On the night e launched the campaign at City Hall, August 26, 1970, a theme was lected as a message to the provincial government: "Hurry!". The mbol for the campaign was the large "H" instantly recognizable as e public traffic sign for a hospital. So it became the Hurry Hospital ampaign, and caught the imagination of the community and media, ho received it with surprising enthusiasm.

At first, Premier Robichaud said, "The Hurry Hospital Campaign ill not advance the decision for a new hospital in Fredericton by even a ngle minute!" During 1971, however, a brief prepared by the Hurry

Hospital Campaign team was received and considered by the provincial cabinet. It was less than a year later, in July of 1972, that the decision was announced to construct a brand new facility near the corner of Priestman and Regent Streets. This commitment was fulfilled under the Hatfield administration, and fittingly named the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital. The campaign demonstrated that good political leadership by City Council was able to inspire a surge of public spirit and momentum that could not long be ignored. Reflecting back on that initiative, I have always felt it was one of the most creative marketing and political moves in which I have been involved during business or public life, in terms of effectively mobilizing public opinion towards a specific objective. It was in early October of 1972 that Dr. G. Everett Chalmers, still MLA for Fredericton at the time, laid the cornerstone for the new hospital that marked the official start of construction on the $23.9 million facility. The Hurry Hospital Campaign had clearly realized its purpose.

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The urban renewal discussions for redevelopment of downtown Fredericton began in 1966, prior to my election to City Council. It quickly became the central issue for controversial and contentious debates over the next two years. It also turned out to be the second large lesson about political performance that I was to learn.

Our new City Council decided early on to plan and prepare for redevelopment proposals, and eventually we published national requests for submissions from qualified developers. The most exciting one came from a company named Marathon Realty, the Montreal development agency of the CPR, and its plans called for a restored City Hall complex, library, courthouse, thirteen-storey office tower and retail shopping outlets. The initial proposal was that everything along Queen Street on the river side, between City Hall and the Military Compound men's barracks on Carleton Street, would be redeveloped. Most exciting of all, for the first time ever that plan also visualized a new bridge, (then proposed at York Street), and a riverfront drive which would turn the face of the city towards the St. John River. This would bring focus to that

tremendous river asset, one that had been almost entirely ignored by Fredericton's previous generations. The total cost for this proposal was estimated at $12 million. It seemed a wonderful and forward-looking plan, so after extensive consideration and with my own strongly expressed support, City Council approved the concept and awarded the preliminary development opportunity to Marathon.

Here is where the political lesson began, however, as this dramatic proposal to change the face of the city generated a great deal of interest, but also serious concern and criticism. The most intense criticism was concentrated on the implied destruction of historical assets and values, particularly in the Military Compound area, but was directed to many other details as well. In January of 1972, Heritage Trust was formed by Dr. Stuart A. Smith of UNB, to oppose the plans for urban renewal in downtown Fredericton. It included members of the York Sunbury Historical Society, the UNB History Club and the Fredericton branch of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick. The Heritage Trust chairman said that it was "not aiming to perpetuate a sentimental attachment to everything old, but it does see clearly that what is good, attractive and rewarding about life in Fredericton arises out of the environment created for us by history."

This barrage of criticism and organized opposition to the project was frustrating to me and to all councillors, and had not been anticipated at all. This was our big mistake, that we had not sufficiently consulted the community, nor had we considered the inherent resistance which frequently co-exists with change. The subject of urban renewal had been a priority for several years, but it seemed the minute we started to do something about it, along came a public campaign determined to stop our progress in its tracks. Who would have ever thought that a few historians would create such a major public opposition? Heritage Trust became a powerful force that moved our whole community, and it has remained so to this day. It did not take very long for the members of City Council to start backing away from the project, and in the end there were only two or three of us still standing for it.

Fortunately, I had the presence of mind to recognize that we were swimming against a tide of public opinion, which is something that is virtually impossible to do on major political issues. So during the early months of 1972 our City Council decided to turn down the Marathon concept, and transferred the development opportunity to the Hardman consortium from Halifax to build Kings Place on the entire block surrounded by King, Brunswick, Carleton and York Streets. The defeat of the Marathon proposal was a deep disappointment to me, because it was more than just an office building, and contained important elements of our whole future vision such as the bridge and riverfront drive. In describing the decision to leave the Marathon proposal for more realistic possibilities, I was quoted in the media as saying: "No one is to blame and there is no apology to offer for the failure of our efforts over the last fifteen months in urban renewal. We selected a course to follow that we believed was the best available; we have proceeded with our best efforts until all practical possibilities of its reality have been exhausted. The feasibility of urban renewal has been shown. We have not failed to deliver a sound possibility. We have failed to accept it."

Subsequent events over future years have demonstrated that those initial efforts at urban renewal with Marathon Realty did become the catalyst for urban redevelopment in Fredericton. Perhaps that long initial debate was necessary in order to fully engage the community and to plot a viable future course to the redevelopment success which we have since enjoyed in this city.

A key to the Kings Place project was a small piece of land which NB Tel owned on Carleton Street where the dial exchange building is now located. For many months, NB Tel and its President, Ken Cox, had been trying to gain approval for the dial exchange to be located back on George Street across from the high school, which was essentially a residential area. He was a very strong and persuasive individual, and we had a good many hot debates but eventually became good friends. Finally, one Saturday morning he came to my home and confronted me with the question, "What do you want us to do?" I said, "Ken, we want

ou to build your dial exchange building on the lot which you own at arleton Street, and it will become the key to developing the whole lock." His answer was, "Okay, if that's what you want, we will do it."

From that point forward, the pieces started to fall in place quite uickly, and NB Tel eventually became a partner with Hardman and the ank of Nova Scotia to make Kings Place possible. It was a $7.5 million roposal, and was given the green light by City Council on July 25, 1972. Then it was finally constructed and opened many months later, the hole city had a sense of achievement that the process of urban renewal i our central business district was truly under way.

Over succeeding months and years, the renewal of downtown redericton continued with projects such as the Bank of Montreal uilding, Carleton Place by Ross Ventures, the TD Bank building at the orner of Queen and Westmorland Streets by the Kileel family and a alifax group, restoration of the Military Compound, restoration of City all and the adjacent old *Gleaner* building, and ultimately – the owning glory of Fredericton's urban renewal plan – construction of ie new Westmorland Street bridge and riverfront drive. It is satisfying see how downtown Fredericton has retained its strategic focus and tality as the core of our capital city, discreetly blending the old and the ew into what remains one of the most beautiful river cities to be found ywhere in North America. To have helped play a small part in iggering this process of renewal at the beginning of the 1970's is, I ow, a source of pride and fulfillment for every member of the City ouncils involved in that process during those years.

The new bridge and riverfront drive were not actually nstructed during those years, but as the obvious lynchpins to the future pansion and orderly development of the whole community they were ie top planning priority, one that could not be ignored and one that emanded immediate action at the time. To those citizens living in areas ce Devon, Marysville, Nashwaaksis and Barker's Point, there was no ngle element of life in Fredericton that brought such frustration and espair as the old two-lane Carleton Street bridge.

I still take a great deal of satisfaction when I look at the central business district today because, even though there remains much revitalization work to do, it is a dramatically different setting from the dilapidated downtown of thirty or forty years ago. Thank goodness we learned the early lesson, recognizing and accepting that Heritage Trust and public opinion could not be won over on the Marathon project. By retreating towards a consensus in another and more acceptable direction at Kings Place, we were able to initiate and ultimately achieve the main goals of urban renewal.

Another lesson about politics I learned then was that you cannot get too far ahead of public opinion, and success comes from building a consensus around good ideas before they are too strongly introduced. This should not be perceived as a weak approach, but rather as the test of true political judgement and leadership. As in business it is said that "you cannot market what you cannot sell," so in politics "you cannot legislate what your constituency will not support." The key is to determine where the public needs and wants to go, and to then lead them in those directions carefully, constructively and sometimes courageously. There is a lot of truth to the old adage "I am your leader; tell me where you want to go."

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Back in 1969, one of the obvious major barriers to the future growth and development of Fredericton was the fragmentation and lack of cohesive local government throughout the greater city district. Although the immediate city area comprised more than fifty thousand citizens, most of them working within the city limits, only about half resided in Fredericton, with the rest scattered throughout one town (Marysville), four villages (Nashwaaksis, Barker's Point, Silverwood and New Maryland), and two local service districts (Lincoln and Hanwell Road). No serious effort had been made for many years to bring all of these elements together into a consolidated and cohesive single city. It was clearly the way to realize our potential as a dynamic and prosperous community. It was also a goal that I

had identified as a priority when originally setting out to run for City Council and for Mayor.

The amalgamation committee that had been formed while I was still a councillor became the Greater Fredericton Cooperative Committee, with the approval and support of the Mayors of all five municipalities (Neil Allen for Marysville, Elbridge Wilkins for Nashwaaksis, Les Hull for Silverwood, Byron Lawrence for Barker's Point and myself for Fredericton). This forum was conceived to place us around the same table on a regular basis for discussion of the future possibilities of working together, and perhaps eventually bringing all our communities into a single city. In effect, it became a pilot process for how an amalgamated City Council might function, what it would look and feel like. We discussed the pros and cons amongst ourselves for almost two years, and consulted extensively with the Department of Municipal Affairs about the kinds of incentives and accommodations that would make amalgamation feasible. Eventually, the concept started to take serious shape, and was generally supported by all concerned. Ultimately a proposal was submitted to the provincial government, which had the power to create and enforce the amalgamation and there was a unanimous consensus to proceed.

The response from the Department of Municipal Affairs was generally positive and supportive. Former Senator Carl Goldenburg was appointed as a consultant to write a report on the prospects for amalgamation in Greater Fredericton. His appointment was initiated by the work of the Greater Fredericton Cooperative Committee, and by the desire of the provincial government to ensure that there was a process of public consultation and professional evaluation before the amalgamation decision was made. The provincial minister at that time was the Hon. Jean Paul LeBlanc who was eventually succeeded by the Hon. Horace Smith. Throughout all of that process the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs was Edwin G. Allen, who later became a Conservative member of the Legislature and the Minister of Municipal Affairs during the last term of the Hatfield government. On July 27, 1971, Senator Goldenburg

submitted his report to the Cooperative Committee, which formed th basis for an eventual submission to the provincial government o November 4, 1971. At its meeting a few days later, the Fredericton Cit Council on a divided vote agreed to inform the provincial governmer that it favoured the concept of amalgamation as recommend by th Greater Fredericton Cooperative Committee.

It was quite a long process of consideration after that, becaus major opposition to amalgamation came from the Village of Ne Maryland, which at that point had not even formally become a villag Public opinion in New Maryland was heavily influenced by the stron views of one particular individual, Danny Cameron, a respecte businessman and citizen who had property developments in the are He wanted no part of becoming integrated with the city of Frederictor Since Danny was then a strong supporter of the Progressive Conservativ government, and a tough opponent in any kind of a fight, the Ministe of Municipal Affairs excluded New Maryland from the discussion almost from the start. Sadly in my opinion, both New Maryland and th Hanwell Road areas have been isolated outside the city limits o Fredericton ever since that time. Looking back, I feel badly that all th others of us failed to some degree; we did not push hard enough for tota inclusion of the entire community and merely allowed the opposin forces in New Maryland to win the battle by default.

The final decision was announced in April of 1973, proclaimin that all of the participating Councils would be disbanded as of July 9t that year, and replaced by an expanded City Council for the new Greate Fredericton area to take office on the same date. It was a very satisfyin accomplishment for everyone who had participated in the process. Ther also seemed to be a general acceptance among all of the elected municipa participants that I would likely be the only one of them offering for electio as Mayor of the newly expanded city. Since I had been a prime move behind the bid to amalgamate, I felt that I had an obligation to seek th Mayor's job as a way of demonstrating a general mandate of support fron a majority of the population for the amalgamation decision.

This was to be the last of three elections in which I was involved or the Mayor's office, even though I served only five years in total. The rst term was for two years, and the second term was for three years but nterrupted by amalgamation at the end of two. This third election was or the one beginning the year of amalgamation, and after that was to be estored to regular three-year terms which have prevailed since then.

While my first election was a very close win over former Mayor Valker, the second, in June of 1971, was a very substantial win over a oken candidate, Ron Gaudet, who started the campaign as an nemployed student and finished with a full time job as organizer for ne provincial New Democratic Party. In this third election, I was pposed by a strong and credible candidate in the person of Al Rioux, a uccessful businessman who at that time was also president of the hamber of Commerce. Thanks to a strong balance of support nroughout the newly amalgamated areas, my margin of victory was lmost two to one. That was an especially satisfying result because it onfirmed for me the acceptance of amalgamation, and permitted me to eclare to all of these communities that we would be working for a stronger future together."

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I understand Al Rioux passed away at the age of eighty-eight on uly 15, 2008, following a brief illness while living in retirement at 'ictoria, BC. He and I had been good business friends over the years, ven though frequently having some differences of opinion about political natters. His passing again reminds me just how important good elationships have been to the fullness of my own life.

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Following are the members of the newly amalgamated City Council of Fredericton as sworn in on July 9, 1973:

J.W. Bud Bird, Mayor

Neil H. Allen
Charles E. Chase
Merlyn E. Cull
A.M. DiGiacinto
Carl E. Howe
Leslie I. Hull
G. Byron Lawrence
Harold L. McFee
Vera A. McKenzie
Ross A.L. Millett
Leonard C. Poore
G. Ronald Rowe
Gerald A. White
Elbridge Wilkins
Nellie E. Winters
Richard Yeomans

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One of the earliest issues addressed during my term as Mayor was that of eventual transition of city administration to a city manager form of government. When I first arrived on council in 1967, Harry Gough had been the city clerk for many years. He did an outstanding job, but all administrative authority remained vested in City Council itself. Every financial decision, even every personnel decision, eventually came to a Council meeting for resolution, although most matters transpired more as a matter of habit and practice. Decisions were only really debated when there was a controversial issue, and there was no administrative structure by which responsibility and authority could be clearly delegated to staff.

In 1971, when Harry Gough announced his retirement, I decided to recommend the concept of engaging a city manager, and revising the administrative structure accordingly. This met with some resistance for a while, so when we engaged John Robison from the provincial government it was for the position of city administrator, as a form of compromise. That concept eventually evolved into one of comprehensive city management, and under his guidance the present management model was developed and put firmly in place. It has been impressive to

watch John Robison go on to lead other major municipalities in Canada, then return to Fredericton to enjoy his retirement while remaining active as a consultant. His successor, Paul Stapleton, continues to help deliver effective service to our growing capital city with a highly professional team at City Hall.

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From the very beginning of our urban renewal efforts, there had been a continuing discussion with the provincial government about the desperate need for a new bridge and riverfront road that would physically provide the ties to bind the newly amalgamated city together. Slowly but surely progress was made, with the most difficult decision being the best location and design for the new bridge. There was lots of controversy about the location, ranging from reconstruction of the old railway bridge, to a site further upriver at the end of Hanwell Road. Finally in May of 1973, after one final review of alternative locations, the Hatfield government announced that a new bridge and riverfront drive would be built in Fredericton at the Westmorland Street location where it now stands, replacing the outdated Carleton Street Bridge, the abutments of which remain in place as a reminder of those difficult traffic days.

Shortly after that location announcement, the design contract was awarded to an engineering consortium which included ADI, and the direction was firmly set for eventual construction of the new multi-lane crossing of the St. John River in the centre of the city, with an integrated riverfront drive system. Even with the planning announcement in 1973, however, no date was given for the beginning of construction. At least we had a location, and we had a commitment. The fight to make it a reality would continue, and did continue, until the new bridge was opened to traffic in 1981.

There are no physical assets in all of New Brunswick more functional and attractive than the Westmorland Street bridge and riverfront drive, which together have become the integrated centrepiece of the Greater Fredericton community, and I believe a source of pride

for every citizen. Before I left the Mayor's office, the provinc government had confirmed those planning decisions and had award design contracts. So I get a great feeling of satisfaction every time I cr over the bridge, because that structure is one that truly helps unite o whole community.

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My final year at City Hall was filled with special and unexpect challenges, one of them being the issue of bilingualism that ultimate became, I feel, among the most important public service contributio of my political career. The city of Fredericton had never formal acknowledged or accepted any specific responsibility for bilingualis despite being the capital city of New Brunswick. However, in mid-197 a letter arrived from the Acadian Society requesting that Frederict take some formal action to demonstrate its recognition of the Fren facts of life in the province. It suggested that street signs might l bilingual, that some city employees could be bilingual, and that tl annual Acadian holiday be proclaimed as a formal celebration with the city. The most significant request was that the City Council give i support for construction of a new French cultural centre.

When this letter was first received there was an inclination b many councillors to place it in the so-called circular file, the waste baske With both Canada and New Brunswick then officially bilingua however, it was to me unthinkable that we not face up to this issue an deal with it in a constructive way. So after much debate and persuasio it was agreed that the request from the Acadian Society be referred to special council committee for further study and report. Even at tha most councillors felt it would be only a token exercise, and th ultimately no action would be taken.

Not surprisingly, with media reporting about every detail, th matter quickly became a very controversial issue. I had some friends an supporters who privately criticized me for ever allowing it to surfac Nevertheless, I felt strongly that Fredericton had a serious obligation a

ıe capital city to take a positive and constructive position, because it 'as clear that bilingualism was here to stay in the future nature of our rovince and our country.

Because Premier Richard Hatfield and his government were then rongly leading the bilingual debate in New Brunswick, I decided to ıvite him to a formal City Council meeting to address the subject. To the est of my knowledge that was one of the first times a sitting Premier ttended the Fredericton City Council to make a formal presentation. It ırned out to be quite an effective one, as he made a profound and ompelling address, then answered several questions both from ouncillors and citizens in the audience. His performance on that ccasion left me proud to be associated with the Hatfield legacy on this ındamental language policy.

On November 13, 1973, the issue of bilingualism came to a ramatic head at Fredericton's City Council. The report of the special ouncil committee was presented to a full council meeting. It was a well easoned summary of the particular responsibility for bilingualism and iculturalism which Fredericton has as the capital of New Brunswick. hat civic responsibility was mainly to demonstrate in practical ways the nity of the two major linguistic segments of our population, and the eport especially recommended a series of first steps for action. These ıcluded areas of essential services such as fire, police and City Hall, here it was recommended that at least one bilingual person be on duty : all times; public relations, where welcoming signs at city limits should e in both official languages; learning opportunities, so that City Hall mployees be encouraged to take French language training; documents ıch as traffic tickets and tax bills to be considered for printing in both fficial languages. The report pointed out that where translation services ere required, the provincial government would undoubtedly support ıe costs involved. At first reading of that report, I felt pleased, proud nd relieved at the positive nature of its recommendations.

However, those good feelings were short-lived because, as easonable and constructive as the report appeared to be, none of the

councillors on the committee were prepared to offer a resolution for acceptance of it. In fact, the chair of the committee, one of our most intelligent and broad-minded members, felt the issue was so contentious that the best approach was to merely present the report, but without necessarily recommending its adoption. The words were clear, "because of the concern shown by many citizens, Francophones as well as Anglophones, I am not prepared at this time to make any recommendations on the report." With that commentary it then followed clearly that all sixteen councillors would vote to merely file this historic report, which in effect meant to reject it.

That was a defining moment for me in political life, because it placed the full weight and burden of responsibility for council leadership before me – a moment of truth. Sitting in the Mayor's chair, and not having a vote except in the case of a tie, I was almost helpless to witness the startling reality of sixteen councillors, all good people and citizens in their own respective ways, attempting to file away and avoid facing up to what had already become the most critical issue in the developing character of our whole country.

Perhaps I had some advantage in my own perspective because of having worked for several years in northern New Brunswick and Quebec, in almost totally bilingual communities, and certainly also because I had been actively involved as a director of the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities over recent years which provided me a sense of national insight on the broad Canadian scene. Whatever the inspiration, I knew it was simply wrong for my colleagues on Fredericton City Council to take that action, and I felt duty-bound to challenge their decision and to try and lead in a more positive direction. Simply from impulse, I made the following unprepared and unrehearsed statement as soon as the motion to file had been presented, and I quote from the record:

"May I speak from the chair on this item? Well, members of council, as the capital city of Fredericton I feel that we are not facing this issue in merely filing this report, and I feel that we have not answered the

correspondence which started it, which was in effect to ask us will we take action or what action will we take. I suppose by filing the committee's report we have in a way said we will take no action, but it is not even a real square 'no, we will not do anything.' I agree with the general comments of Councillor McKenzie and others, and I have had the same representation as you all from our citizens, that the implementation of the recommendations that were contained in the report would have been difficult, certainly many of them at this time."

"But I would have hoped and would in my own conscience have had to feel support for at least an expression of approval in principle of Councillor McKenzie's report; or if not that far, at least the request that was articulated in one of the letters that the principle of some minimum form of bilingual capability be available in civic administration. And I think that if there was even a way for communication and consideration and dialogue to continue...but the way it has been handled, it is just non-action, and I could not help but express my disappointment that this council would have handled such a sensitive and delicate subject that way."

To keep the subject alive, I had already been planning to establish a Mayor's Community Committee on Language and Culture for the purpose of providing a public forum in which discussions and debate about these subjects could take place as the issues evolved in our city. There was really no legal need for me to obtain council approval for such an initiative, because the Mayor's position offers the flexibility to interact with the community in any number of ways so long as there are no unbudgeted public costs involved. However, I felt that the committee would be much more effective if it was perceived to be supported by City Council, and had the kind of official mandate that would raise its status among citizens and those who would be participating in it or making representations to it. In proposing this community committee, I continued to address council using the following words:

"It is obvious that the matter of English-French languages and cultures will be the major subject area in the considerations of this special committee. As the capital city of New Brunswick, Fredericton has a

special responsibility to reflect and represent both of the official languag and cultures of which our province is primarily comprised. While believe that most of our citizens are prepared to reasonably accept a support the principles which are involved in these subjects, nonethele it must be recognized that these are difficult and sensitive issues. The have been expressions of real concern on both sides of the question, a at the extremities there are even feelings of deep resentment and fear f the future. To ignore the reality of this concern in either direction wou be folly, and could divide our community in bitterness."

"We must not allow this to happen. Despite the manner in whi these issues have been approached in other cities and provinces, I belie that Fredericton must endeavour to set an example of civic maturity a dignity that will permit these matters to develop and be resolved in civilized spirit of responsibility and goodwill. To do so, I believe that v must face the questions squarely, discuss them openly and fully, and se mutual understanding and tolerance. The terms of reference for th special community committee have been drawn to allow that kind dialogue to take place."

To my shock and dismay, and to end what was certainly one the most difficult City Council meetings I had ever experienced, th motion to create the Community Committee on Language and Cultu was also unanimously rejected by my fellow councillors. In the next fe days, however, my instincts were perceived to be on the right track an my position gained public support quite quickly. On November 16, 197 *The Daily Gleaner* in an editorial said:

"The Fredericton City Council took a backwards step, perha two, at its meeting this week. Its decisions, smacking of bigotry an indifference, may return to haunt civic administrations of the future. Th City Council also turned down a proposal by the Mayor that community committee be formed to act as a sounding board in their cit on matters of language and culture. We believe that such a committe would provide a forum in which citizens could state their views o controversial subjects and so mitigate violent reactions."

"His has to be the right attitude. A French fact does exist here and it will not go away, even if some councillors sweep it under the carpet from time to time. Fredericton is the capital city of a province which has opted for bilingualism and biculturalism and should be showing leadership. If the capital city is going to reject even the vestiges of a two-language policy, bilingualism in New Brunswick is on a perilous course."

Less than a month later, at its last meeting of the year on December 10, 1973, City Council reversed its position and gave approval to the community committee proposal. It would be made up of twenty-five citizens from throughout Fredericton, and their selection would purposely avoid any direct representation from interested groups or organizations, but would objectively be comprised of a cross section of citizens representative of all linguistic and cultural elements of the community. It was my view that such a continuing forum for discussion and debate would remove the passion from the issues, and eventually develop constructive dialogue that would lead to acceptable action.

Over subsequent months that committee played a very important public role of generating frank and transparent dialogue about difficult issues pertaining to bilingualism and biculturalism, including the proposed construction of a then $2.8 million French school and community centre. Today, thirty-five years later, it is extremely satisfying to witness the confidence and comfort with which Fredericton citizens live and communicate in the language of their choice. The most vivid illustration of this reality is the existence of Centre Communautaire Sainte-Anne on Regent Street, and a new French Roman Catholic Church standing proudly on the upper corner of that block. I believe it is a source of pride for almost all citizens that Fredericton truly is fulfilling its role as the capital city of the only bilingual province in all of Canada.

Especially, it makes me feel good to see both Francophone and Anglophone citizens sharing enjoyment and pride in our capital city community, with the two languages being spoken freely and easily in all

public places. On Saturday mornings at the Fredericton Farmer's Market you can readily hear and feel the unmistakable tone of a vibrant and healthy bilingual community. This is an extremely important reality, because New Brunswick as a province is the only true expression of our bilingual country, and so it is fitting that the capital city is clearly cast in that same mould. Leadership on the bilingual issue took more resolve and determination than any other political challenge I have faced, because it was clearly going to be unpopular at the outset. I felt convinced that the principles were the right ones, and would eventually be recognized and accepted by the strong majority of Fredericton citizens. Over the years that have followed, this has happened, and marks one of the truly satisfying results from my political life, one that I feel helps to leave our local world a little better than we found it.

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More than thirty years later, in 2005 and 2006, there was a fund-raising event which I had the privilege to chair, that demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt the genuine and positive manner in which the overall community of Fredericton has embraced its Francophone citizens, and the comfortable and constructive way in which they work together with Anglophones for common purposes. The campaign was being conducted on behalf of the international music group called Jeunesses Musicales – in this case the New Brunswick chapter – and it culminated in a grand benefit concert on April 12, 2006, at which Fredericton's own international opera star, Measha Brueggergosman, was performing. To add to the bicultural character of the evening, the concert was performed at Wilmot United Church, one of the oldest English Protestant institutions in the city.

The organizing committee was a working blend of English and French individuals from all walks of life in the community, who devoted countless hours of volunteer time over almost a full year in planning and implementing this memorable evening. It was not only a large financial success, but Wilmot Church was filled to capacity, representing a celebration of the cosmopolitan nature of life that has become

characteristic of New Brunswick's capital city. This experience gave me a special feeling of satisfaction in seeing such clear evidence that the issues we confronted and addressed so comprehensively at City Council in the early 1970's were well worth doing indeed!

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With all the pride and satisfaction to be taken in the bilingual harmony achieved in New Brunswick over the past fifty years, it was more than a little concerning to read in the fall of 2009 that the city of Dieppe was considering a commercial sign by-law to legislate either equally bilingual or unilingual French text on all private business signs within its jurisdiction. In the words of Dieppe's Mayor, Jean LeBlanc, the purpose of this by-law was to "improve the language landscape" so as to better serve its citizens as the principal Francophone city in New Brunswick. Given the difficult positions I experienced at City Hall in Fredericton during 1973 to support the beginnings of bilingualism in our capital city, I find the proposed initiative by Dieppe to be thoughtless and unnecessary, attempting to force private business people to make language decisions which they have the freedom to do of their own accord. The policy goes beyond bilingualism, with an edge towards unilingualism, and intrudes on basic private freedom, which I feel offends the spirit and the letter of the Official Languages Act. I am surprised that it is not against the law.

In any event, I decided to express my views respectfully in a letter to the Dieppe City Council which was dated December 17, 2009, and am looking forward to a favourable resolution. If this sign by-law gathers momentum and spreads to other communities, I predict that it will prove very divisive throughout New Brunswick, and could set bilingual relationships back by immeasurable degrees. Hopefully there will be responsible New Brunswick citizens, both French and English, who will recognize and rescind these provocative and dangerous steps before they can be taken.

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Being the Mayor of a city like Fredericton provides an importar platform for one to express views, not only about the affairs of your ow immediate municipality, but also about your province, the region or eve the whole country. One such issue about which I felt quite strongly a that time was the much discussed prospect of Maritime Union. As ou City Council was preparing the case for the amalgamation of Greate Fredericton, our consultant was the late Carl Goldenburg, who ha written the formal report recommending Maritime Union several yea earlier. I felt there was an opportunity at least for historical purposes fc the Mayor of Fredericton to go on record about that important matte The following excerpt is taken from that statement:

"The possibility of Maritime Union is a challenging an exciting opportunity to significantly change the future destiny of ou country for the better, the like of which seldom comes to such a regio of people in their own time. Whether union will come about wi depend largely on the calibre of leadership which the concept receive and on just how badly we really want to improve our overall economi position and our influence as a full partner in Confederation. Unless strong majority of Maritimers are truly and sincerely willing to mak the short term local sacrifices necessary to bring about the essenti long term balance, stability and real unity of a single province, then w should not attempt it."

Of course, I also made the point that Fredericton would be a gre capital city for the Maritimes, but that immediately provoked an exampl of the extreme controversy and difficult reconciliations that would b involved before union could ever become a reality. So I accepted th advice and wisdom of most experienced politicians that even the attemp to achieve Maritime Union would likely have created serious long ter discord and not ever be achieved, so perhaps it was better to not even tr However, I still cannot remove it from my mind that a time will com when economic and political reality will simply demand that the thre Maritime Provinces, and possibly also Newfoundland and Labrador, bin themselves tightly together to remain viable in both economical an

itical terms in this increasingly global world. It is a concept that I uld certainly support and work for at any time, and perhaps today in sent economic circumstances it should be very seriously re-examined.

One of the great difficulties for New Brunswick in any concept of ional union, of course, would be the important need to preserve our icial bilingual status. This would likely be hard to persuade the other ee provinces to adopt, so up to now political union has been discarded almost an impossible concept, with the four provinces working in ious other ways together to improve collaboration and cooperation. wever, with vision and leadership from both linguistic sectors of the w Brunswick community, possibly a way could even be found to create ngle consolidated economic union.

In the summer of 1973, I was elected president of the Canadian leration of Mayors and Municipalities at its annual meeting in arlottetown. Since I had been elected vice-president the previous year, vas expected that I would assume that higher office as a matter of irse, but the incumbent president, Mayor Des Newman of Whitby, tario, decided to break precedent by re-offering for the position. So re was a spirited election battle during the convention. With the help many colleagues who were present, especially from the Atlantic gion, and with Mayor Bob Lockhart of Saint John serving very ongly as my campaign manager, we won that contest, which was ost coincidental with my re-election for the final one-year term as yor of the newly amalgamated City of Fredericton. This result at arlottetown was generally well received, as expressed in this excerpt m an editorial in the *Telegraph-Journal*:

"As the first Maritime Provinces' Mayor to head the national leration, Mayor Bird is not just taking his turn at office, an honorary to the chair. His is a working assignment. And no doubt his fellow yors are looking to his industry, talent for innovation and strongly d views to do something of a rescue job. They have chosen a likely n. Mayor Bird has always found the time to fulfill the responsibilities undertakes. But the CFMM's chair, added to the urgent business to be handled in Fredericton, gives Bud Bird enough on his plate to test his powers of municipal digestion. His record, however, suggests the chances are good that he will meet this challenge forcefully and capably."

Thus, in my final year as Mayor of Fredericton, there was a significant national context to my activities, although helped considerably by the fact that the executive director of the CFMM was Guy Levesque, a New Brunswicker who had been formerly employed by the provincial government in Fredericton. Collaborating closely, we were able to get some good work done, although in the end we were not successful in our attempts to convene a third tri-level conference of governments following those held earlier in Toronto and Edmonton the previous two years. The federal government, under its then Minister for Urban Affairs, Hon. Ron Basford, continually backed the tri-level process, but there was equally consistent reluctance from the provinces to allow any formal compromise of their authority and jurisdiction for municipal affairs. Even today there continues to be a healthy process of informal consultation among all three levels of government on a national basis. During my one-year term as president of the CFMM, our national board made a full presentation to Prime Minister Trudeau and his federal cabinet about municipal financial matters, including a recommendation for a tri-level task force to study public finances as they pertain to municipalities in Canada. That presentation was held in April of 1974, later followed by the annual convention of the CFMM in Winnipeg, at which Minister Basford announced the formation of such a task force. Regrettably, the concept of three-way consultation about municipal affairs seems to have faded away over the subsequent thirty-five years.

That annual CFMM meeting at Winnipeg was the first week of June in 1974, coming very close to the end of my term as Mayor of Fredericton. It was a memorable month for me in many respects, sadly because my father John L. Bird passed away on June 17th. This represented another moment of both grieving and fulfilment for me because I knew how proud it had made him to see me serving as the Mayor of Fredericton during his lifetime. My term in office had officially

ended one week earlier. When I announced that I would not be re-offering for another term as Mayor, the editorial in *The Daily Gleaner* on March 13, 1974, read:

"Mayor Bird has given Fredericton sound civic leadership in his half decade of office. Much of what he set out as his list of aims in assuming office has been accomplished, is in progress or is in prospect. His status in municipal politics has been recognized on the national scale by the choice of him as their president by the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities. Due to the 1973 amalgamation and natural increase, he leaves Fredericton a city of almost twice the population it had when he assumed office. At this stage in the guessing game, provincial politics is much the more strongly favoured for Mayor Bird. His occupancy of a front bench on one side or other of the next legislative assembly is by no means improbable. Unquestionably he has much to bring to provincial politics if he enters that avenue of service."

I still had a young and growing business to run, and my priorities were quite evenly divided between City Hall and JWBCO. During those seven years on City Council, JWBCO continued to grow and flourish, especially so in the Fredericton area through the acquisition of Neill's Wholesale. It was to nurture that growth and expand on a similar scale into Nova Scotia that helped motivate my decision not to re-offer for municipal election after 1974. Another reason was my instinct that, having done a reasonably good job and having established a moderately respectable reputation, it was an ideal time to move on, literally to quit while still ahead.

I feel this is an important principle in the practice of politics, because there is always the danger that you will wear out your welcome, go stale or get into a rut. The voters are fickle, and their memories are short. The minute they sense that you want or need the job unduly, they will decide to put you out. By the same token, voters seldom believe or understand why a successful politician would ever want to leave the job, which is precisely why it is a good idea to do so. Nothing I ever did in politics seemed to create as much obvious respect for me as when I left

City Hall, and later the provincial government, of my own accord. People seemed to marvel that one would be willing to leave elected office voluntarily, and I sensed enhanced appreciation for my term of service as a result of my own decision to move on.

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The former Mayor of Nashwaaksis before amalgamation, Councillor Elbridge Wilkins, was elected to succeed me. He was and remains a friend, but I was seriously embarrassed by the fact that, during the election campaign, I had expressed support for another friend, the late Councillor Hymie McPhee, which was obviously a dumb political move for anyone to make when dealing with mutual friends. Thankfully, Ebby Wilkins has always been a broad-minded and forgiving man, so I feel good that our friendship has been retained. For many more years than myself, he served Fredericton as its well-liked and highly respected Mayor. I should also say that Hymie McPhee will long be remembered for his outstanding service both on City Council and the school board, and it is sad that he passed away prematurely only a few years later.

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Being followed as Mayor by Ebby Wilkins prompts another interesting and coincidental story that took place several years earlier, before I ever thought about running for election to City Council. One spring day I was invited by my close friend Bert Bates to go fishing at a Miramichi lake called Whitney Pond where we would meet two brothers, Elbridge and Pete Wilkins, to stay at their camp for the evening. While Bert and I had been around together for a lifetime, I had never met the Wilkins brothers who were close to him. I knew of course that Bert did not drink spirits of any kind, so I resigned myself to a dry trip and didn't even take alcoholic refreshments for myself. I had obviously assumed that his friends would be like Bert, very temperate, so I was a little surprised when just before dinner, Ebby (as Elbridge has always been called) asked me quietly, "Would you like a little drink before dinner? We're a lot like Bert, and don't drink very much, but I brought a small bottle along to treat if you feel like it!"

To make a long story short, Ebby had more than a small bottle d he and I became quite inebriated before the evening was over. As ıal, Bert watched us in disgust, and made sure we did not hurt rselves. After dinner we started listening to the radio, and it turned out be the night of the Fredericton City Council election in 1964, with len Clark, the multi-million dollar car dealer and high profile man in dericton, running against Bill Walker, the relatively poor clothing rchant. It had been a great campaign, with Alden spending freely and y sure of victory. In the end he was defeated by Bill Walker, and we at camp were all enthused about the upset by the underdog. The liquid reshments obviously helped us to enjoy the evening. What is ironic, n prophetic, about that night is that both Ebby and I would eventually h sit in the Mayor's chair at Fredericton City Hall, first myself in 1969 d then Ebby succeeding me in 1974. But on the night of that fishing at Whitney Pond, neither one of us had any intention whatsoever of oming involved in Fredericton municipal politics. Quite a story about ncidence, and omens for the future.

Chapter 5

Family Life

Thankfully, for many reasons elected office at the municipal level in New Brunswick has never been seen in the context of party politics. In fact, being a City Councillor or even a Mayor, while certainly regarded as important public service, largely remains a part-time activity in one's private life somewhat similar though well beyond holding office in the Kiwanis Club or the Chamber of Commerce. Consequently, those first two years on City Council and the five years that followed as Mayor all ran together through the thread of my private life and the continued building of J.W. Bird and Company Limited. My entry into the so-called world of real partisan politics was not to follow for some time.

During the years 1965 and 1966, while still living with four children on Cedar Avenue in Nashwaaksis, and well before any thoughts of municipal office, I discovered a new property that was to become our family home for all of the years that have followed. On the corner of Simcoe Court and Oxford Street, between York and Smythe Streets, there

was a large lot that had been a portion of "the backwoods up the hill" when I was a boy living downtown. The area was heavily wooded with beautiful trees, and there was an old creek that ran downhill almost exactly where our back driveway is now located. I remember driving up York Street one day in 1965 and seeing the new road called Oxford Street being developed, so I decided to act quickly. I contacted Edith Harper, the noted real estate agent, to tell her I wanted to buy that corner lot, and maybe even two more along Oxford Street adjacent to it. She said, "Bud, you had better hurry, because these lots are selling fast." The next afternoon, I drove by to see that a driveway was being cut on the second lot, and the third lot was already almost cleared. So without any more hesitation, not exactly knowing where I would find the money, I bought both the corner lot and the second one for a total of $7,500. I have been grieving for years that I had not acted one day earlier and bought the third one as well. The address is 7 Simcoe Court, and as it has turned out, we do have one of the nicest corner properties in Fredericton, with lots of trees and a big yard, and we never cease to enjoy our surroundings.

My interest in searching for unique properties has continued to this day. On many occasions over the years, I have tried to persuade Peggy that we should build a new home along the St. John River, where I had found at least two excellent locations to do so, but she has steadfastly refused to move. In no uncertain terms she has made it clear about 7 Simcoe Court; "This is my home, and this is where I am going to stay."

Our family life at that home has spread over seven children and twelve grandchildren; actually two families, which Peggy and I put together forty-one years ago during the Christmas season of 1969 with our wedding taking place on December 27th that year. Prior to that my own family had consisted of four children living with me since Marilyn and I were divorced in 1963; Peggy had been raising her family of three since the death of her first husband, RCAF pilot Kaye Huet, in 1965.

Eldest daughter Cathy is the loving mother of three girls, Lindsay, Jocelyn and Meghan. She has earned great pride and respect for her primary career in nursing, which has included certification as a

Registered Nurse, a Bachelors degree in nursing and, with great effort and commitment as a mature student, a Masters degree in nursing at the age of fifty-five. She also graduated in her early life with a law degree from UNB, and practised real estate law for several years in Calgary. Her first love, however, has always been nursing and she now holds a senior position as an administrator and a teacher at a hospital in Topeka, Kansas. Cathy is married to Larry Kettlewell, a computer security manager for the state of Kansas. Her youngest daughter Meghan lives with them, having just graduated from university with a business degree and holding a good job in a local bank. Oldest daughter Lindsay is with Telus in Calgary, and middle daughter Jocelyn is a business graduate and a professional land manager for the city of Calgary.

Eldest son Stephen passed away in 1986, and part of his story is told elsewhere in these chapters. His priorities in life were friends and theatre, and he graduated with a degree in fine arts from York University.

Second daughter Nancy has had a successful career as a professional psychologist in Calgary, and she has raised two children, Audrey and Leland, both now chemical engineers. After a terrifying bout with multiple sclerosis in 2007, Nancy has now recovered almost completely, and is living happily with her husband Dick Zeeuwen, an engineer in the petroleum industry, at their home in Calgary and their summer cottage at Lake Winnipeg.

Son Bill holds an MBA from Dalhousie University, and has lived in Calgary with his wife Nancy for more than thirty years, where he is general manager of a major commercial real estate firm for western Canada. They are proud parents of daughter Stephanie, who is studying to be a real estate appraiser, and son John, who has recently graduated as a survey engineer. Both Bill and Nancy are addicted to golf, and have a great life together in the discovery of new courses and pursuit of lower scores.

Son Mickey (or Michael as he is formally known), being only three months younger than Bill, has more or less shared the link with him between our two families. Also a business graduate, Mickey has

nade a successful career for himself in the investment business, and is urrently a vice-president for RBC Securities in Brampton, Ontario. He nd his wife Chris have two daughters, Ashley and Elise, both still in igh school. Sharing common athletic abilities and aptitudes, Mickey nd Chris have often competed in triathlon events together, and their amily life is a full one, with both daughters excelling in school and at a ide variety of youth activities.

Daughter Karen lives in Saint John, where she was been involved n the investment business for several years with both Nesbitt Burns and Wood Gundy. More recently, she has qualified herself as a real estate roker with Royal LePage. A graduate of UNB's law school, Karen also lecided in 2009 to re-write her bar admission exams and was re-dmitted to the legal profession in June of 2010. She will be combining eal estate and law careers, and has already made a good start. The nother of two sons, Matthew and Jeffrey, at UNB and in high school espectively in Saint John, Karen lives a very full life that also includes a ledication to physical fitness.

Youngest of all, Margot is a true entrepreneur. With her former usband Kent Fox, she helped own and operate a Mark's Work Wearhouse franchise that was eventually sold back as a corporate store. More recently, she invested as the owner of the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory in Fredericton. Despite very long hours and dedicated effort, the business was not successful and Margot has terminated her wnership of it. She is presently regional manager in New Brunswick for national chain of ladies clothing. A graduate with a degree in education rom Acadia and UNB, Margot's teaching efforts have been confined to aising her much-loved son Michael. Since the day of his birth more than leven years ago, Michael has been the priority of Margot's life. A happier nother could not be found.

While we don't see a lot of each other as a whole family, communication has been steady over the years and there is a strong amily bond. A great deal of the credit for this bond must go to Peggy, who has spread her affection fairly and evenly among all our children

and grandchildren over the years. There is also a common bond in terms of the family-owned business, with the children happy to let me run BHL as my own retirement program in hope and confidence there will something left for everyone when I am through.

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After Peggy and I were married, the search for a summer cottage became a high priority. She had spent her own youth at the Lawson family cottage on Grand Lake, while our family was raised through summers at Lake George. That likely accounts in part for my love of hunting and fishing and the wonders of our natural landscape in New Brunswick. To satisfy my own preference for the country of rolling hills and lakes north of Fredericton – especially where there might be any prospect for fishing and hunting – we continued our search until we found Picnic Point on Magaguadavic Lake, about a one-hour drive from home and accessible from the road to McAdam, then over a five-mile logging road to reach a one-acre campsite leased from the Georgia Pacific Corporation.

Many years previously a two-storey cottage had been lovingly constructed there for use primarily as a hunting and fishing lodge, with a second small building that had been a sleeping camp for the guides. There was a long sandy beach to one side of the property, and a gentle cove well suited for swimming and light boating. Around the entire upper area of the lake it was undeveloped wilderness, with relatively shallow water and lots of rocks. The setting was a classic portrayal of the Canadian Shield landscape, and we all loved it immediately. I bought the lease from Carl Wilson of Wilson Fishing Camps at Ludlow on the Miramichi.

As a result, we owned our first family cottage. Wonderful summers were spent there, beginning in 1971, and continuing off and on for more than thirty years. During the course of that time we were able to negotiate with Georgia Pacific for purchase of thirty acres of the leased land surrounding the cottage. We then decided to subdivide portions of it, resulting in the construction of three adjacent cottages. In hindsight this

was not a good move, because there was probably more long term value in the full thirty-acre wilderness estate. Once again, this was the result of my impatience to not merely hold land investments but to try and make them financially viable, sometimes doing so more quickly than necessary.

Slowly but surely, both Peggy and I became interested in Atlantic salmon fishing, and one of our favourite trips was the Half Moon canoe run on the upper stretch of the main southwest Miramichi. One of the traditional stops along that trip was at a place called Slate Island, a unique section of the river that we especially enjoyed. In 1975 we did not hesitate when Clayton Stewart of Boiestown, having decided to end his outfitting business, offered us the chance to buy Slate Island Camps. From then on, spending time at Slate Island has been a way of life for us.

In the beginning the only access was by foot with backpacks for a quarter-mile, and then across the river by canoe to the camps. This added a sense of wilderness adventure to every visit, and we spent many weekends there in the late seventies and early eighties, always having to carry in our provisions with coolers and packs on Friday afternoon, and then back out to the car again early Sunday evening. For the most part, the children did not like it very much, although the boys were attracted to the hunting and fishing. We worked together on many occasions to cut the early trails into the woods behind the camps. Over time we improved the construction of the buildings and built a deck between them.

We were also able to obtain a permit to restore the pools where they had filled in, and to improve them further with the placing of large rocks at the tail of each one. The result has been three very stable pools almost at the doorstep of the camp – the Camp Pool, the Landing Pool and, at the mouth of Slate Island Brook, Peggy's Pool – which has provided moderately good salmon fishing over the years. The best fishing has been and remains at Peggy's Pool, where there is always a salmon or two at any time, although frequently hard to raise to the fly. This pool was tagged with Peggy's name around 1980, after two or three seasons when she had better luck than any other person in taking fish from that water, especially some large salmon in the fall. Her name on

this pool is well deserved after so many years of almost making it her own, one which is now well established and accepted in the language and lore of the Upper Miramichi.

The Slate Island property was also a lease, this time from Miramichi Lumber Company, a division of International Paper, which had been granted to Ashley Colter Limited and then subleased to Clayton Stewart. Eventually, after acquiring the camps from Clayton, we were able to arrange through Burton Colter for a direct lease from IP to ourselves. Later on in negotiations with Avenor, the successor to IP, we offered to purchase the land and fishing rights, but were only able to extend the term of the lease from the traditional one or two years to a new period described as, "for my lifetime, and the lifetime of my children." This was an important accomplishment, because it gave us long term tenure, not only to the one-acre campsite, but also to approximately two miles of water stretching from Company Line Rapids to the north, down to and below Slate Island to the south. Thus, somewhat as with Magaguadavic, we had another wilderness estate within our family possession with good hunting and fishing prospects, and all the other values of nature we enjoy so much. We were indeed a fortunate family, dividing our time between the two places over each spring, summer and fall, but frequently a little torn as to which place to be at any given time. When enjoying the beach at Magaguadavic, I was always wondering how the salmon were running at Slate Island. We truly were blessed with an abundance of our own natural resources.

Although both Magaguadavic Lake and Slate Island were primarily family properties, it was conceived from the start that each would be frequently used for commercial purposes in the entertainment of customers, employees and business friends. For example, JWBCO had long been conducting Miramichi canoe trips for clients beginning in the late sixties, sometimes booking with Clayton Stewart over a whole season. Consequently, we placed the ownership of both properties in Bird Holdings Ltd., and the family has leased our private use for an annual fee.

Slate Island continues to be used commercially for customer and aritable purposes, even though BHL ownership was sold in 2004 to e Barrett family business in Woodstock. Both they and ourselves share well controlled schedule and good camp management through head ide John Spencer, an arrangement that offers great enjoyment and a nse of goodwill among all who visit there. For Peggy and me, Slate and has undoubtedly been our favourite place to be together, and she mains nostalgic at the sale of the property even though we still have the ght to go there for the rest of our lives. She feels it is not quite the same, at we are unable to call it our own. I know that the Barretts privately spect and take pride in our legacy at this wonderful place, so I do not are the same sense of loss.

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Our daughter Karen purchased the Magaguadavic Lake cottage om Bird Holdings Ltd. in 2003, which she enjoyed with her two sons ntil selling it in 2008. The property was then acquired by Rod Cox, the n of my old friend, the late Ken Cox, who also had a family cottage at agaguadavic Lake. I have no doubt that Rod and his family will enjoy cnic Point for years to come as one of the premier cottage sites in all New Brunswick.

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In our eternal pursuit of good salmon fishing close to home, I as also a founding member of the Kenmore Club, a group of twelve dividuals with a property just below Norrad's Bridge. The leaders ere the late Punchy Walker and my brother-in-law, Dr. Jack MacKay. he remaining members are a close group of friends, and the property mprises more than one hundred acres of wooded land, with riparian wnership of salmon waters, all in a wonderful camp setting with a eat view of the river and the sunsets. It is easily accessible by car om Fredericton in less than an hour, so as old age sets in and trips Slate Island become more strenuous we will be visiting Kenmore ith increased frequency.

We also decided to become partners in the Ledges Fishing Corporation which was founded in 2007. This provides us with two trips each year to Mountain Channel, at times one of the best salmon spots on the Miramichi, and also two trips each year to the waters around the Ledges Inn in Doaktown which generally hold large numbers of salmon. This investment is a good one for regular access to prime fishing water not far from home, and we have been able to share it with old friends David and Liz Wilson, and with new friends Bill and George Fraser and their wives Gloria and Nora from Nova Scotia. We call our fishing partnership "the grilse group" and are very pleased with it.

This new Ledges membership gives us twelve days of fishing each season for two rods, which works out to about one trip per month over the summer. If we are not able to go, it is possible to send family or other friends, or even to sell the time through a central reservation office at the Ledges Inn. With the combination of Slate Island, Kenmore, Mountain Channel, the Ledges Inn and several other good places we get to visit each year, such as Black Brook, Rocky Brook or Burnt Hill, our schedules for salmon fishing are always filled with possibilities. This speaks volumes about the quality of life we are able to find right here in New Brunswick, and has long been my primary source of relief and restoration from the ever present pursuit of business, political and public service activities.

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No story about my life or JWBCO would be complete without at least a passing reference to an airplane we owned over a period of more than fifteen years in the 1970's and 80's. As with many high-priced assets that people and companies acquire from time to time, when business is going well and owners feel they need a better way, JWBCO had its own airplane because in reality the owner liked to fly.

My interest in flying actually started from a fear of it in early years, almost a sense of claustrophobia and dread when I took my seat in a plane. I can remember in my first few years of commercial flying to

Newfoundland, which was over water much of the way, I would start to feel apprehension on Thursday evening even though my flight was not scheduled until Sunday. It was a situation that worried me, because I would go out of my way to avoid flights, thus spending more time on longer trips by car or restricting my travelling altogether, both of which were impairments to my sales and marketing activities.

In the mid-1960's, halfway through an Air Canada flight from Halifax to St. John's, the pilot walked by and invited me to come up to the cockpit. To my amazement, the minute I entered the flight deck my fears passed away. I became engrossed and captivated by all of the instrumentation and communications equipment, and for the first time felt a sense of comfort and confidence at being able to see how the plane was being operated and controlled. Up to that time sitting in an airplane for me had been like being embalmed in a guided missile, with no sense of control or knowledge about what was happening at all, very much like a man in the back seat of a car who can only travel comfortably when doing the driving himself.

After that I made a point of getting to know pilots on the flights I was taking, and quite frequently got myself invited to sit in the jump-seat behind the crew and watch the operation of the flight. My interest in flying increased to the point that I started taking lessons at the Fredericton Flying Club under instructors Wayne Malone and Dennis Moore, and obtained my first single-engine pilot's license on a Piper Cherokee in early 1969. From that point forward I started to rent the Cherokee for easy flights around New Brunswick, and occasionally to Halifax, building up as much flying time and experience as possible.

A few months later, I was approached by the late Ken Cox, the president of NB Tel (with whom I was also in dialogue about urban renewal issues as the Mayor of Fredericton), and he started to work on me to buy his used airplane, a twin-engine Beechcraft Baron B55, previously owned by local contractor Stan Cassidy, with call letters C-GSCV. Those call letters actually stood for "Stan Cassidy 5", meaning it was the fifth airplane that he had owned, selling it to Ken Cox in order

to buy a new one, even though Stan was then about seventy years of age. There was no doubt of a conspiracy at work because not only Ken Cox, but also his NB Tel pilot Charlie Barton and even Stan Cassidy himself, all started pressing me for the need to expand my flying career into multi-engine capabilities and eventually towards an instrument rating. In order to progress in this direction, they made it sound very convincing that the first step would be for me to purchase SCV from Ken Cox, who then wanted to buy a new plane himself.

In the end they succeeded, and for the first time JWBCO not only had several company cars, but also its own company aircraft. It made me feel that we were really getting important, and of course caused me to spread my wings and travel more frequently, whether I needed to or not. Those were years when our company was growing successfully and the future looked very promising. The ownership of SCV added to the fun of being in business, and it seemed to increase our travel efficiency and even add to our reputation among some customers and suppliers, although in retrospect I realize those perceptions were mostly in my own mind.

Late one afternoon, about two years after we had purchased SCV, I was preparing for takeoff from the Saint John airport when some mechanical difficulty was indicated on pre-flight run-up, so we had to leave the airplane there and drive home. Not only was SCV getting expensive like a used car, but any hint of safety problems quickly resurrected my old fear of flying, so it did not take very long to make the decision that SCV should be traded in for a brand new aircraft.

We had been receiving overtures from Field Aviation in Toronto, the Beechcraft dealer for Canada, so a decision was made to buy a new plane, another B55 Baron. Only a few weeks later, in one of the highlight occasions of my life, I piloted C-GNBB right off the Beechcraft runway at Wichita, Kansas, and flew it back home to Fredericton. We did not actually pick out the call sign, but by coincidence we determined that the letters stood for "New Brunswick Bird". It was a wonderful airplane, very distinctively white with orange and gold stripes, and uniquely identifiable

ıny airport. We used it extensively for more than ten years, putting on ıost five hundred hours annually, with Peggy and I having many morable trips together to places like Florida and the Midwestern ited States, and on one occasion all the way across the continent to Los geles and San Francisco.

For several years we had our own pilot on staff, E.J. (Ed) Tataryn, o now flies for Transport Canada. He was primarily hired to help ıure maximum beneficial use of the aircraft for company business, t also because he was acting as an instructor to "the boss," as I trained my instrument flight rating. In my own view at least, I became an :omplished pilot with an excellent safety rating (save for one ıbarrassing and scary occasion) and in the end logged almost four ɔusand hours of flying time, about half of it on instrument flight ns. It was an activity during a prime period of my life that I enjoyed mensely, but I was always mindful of my original fear of flying which lped to keep me extremely cautious, the first qualification for any od pilot.

The one blot on my safety record was a terrifying one, when ıding Bob Neill's aircraft one beautiful evening at the Fredericton port after a sightseeing trip over northern New Brunswick. We casionally borrowed each other's planes when one was down for ıintenance. The two were identical with one exception: the gear switch d the flap switch were in exactly reverse positions on the instrument nel. When landing that evening, as I was trained to do by instructors, ifted what I thought was the flap switch to settle the plane on the ɔund. In fact I actually lifted the gear switch, and the wheels collapsed ıile we were still rolling to a stop on the runway. Sparks flew as the ɔpellers ground into the tarmac, and for a terrible moment while :ning off all controls I feared a fire. We got the door open and left the ıne in a hurry, and thankfully there was no fire.

My passengers were the late Sandy LeBlanc and his two small ughters, and I shudder to think of how fortunate we were to escape ıat could have been a major tragedy. It has always caused me to

remember the age-old caution about flying: "hours of sheer boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror, and very unforgiving of even a single error."

I also recall with intense embarrassment and chagrin the long ride to Grand Lake I endured that evening in order to see Bob Neill face-to-face, to tell him what damage I had done to his airplane. In his usual manner he was gracious and forgiving, but I can appreciate that he likely would never want to loan me anything again. Especially among pilots, an incident of that nature would tarnish my good flying record for the rest of my days, and it very likely has done so.

Eventually my enthusiasm for flying began to diminish, and Ed Tataryn did more and more of our piloting for us. As I passed my fiftieth birthday, I began to think quite often about the large responsibility of flying business friends and family as a lone pilot on flights at night or under instrument conditions, always mindful of the health risks that come with advancing age. After experiencing some minor engine difficulty while leaving Halifax one day in 1987, with ever more expensive repairs to be anticipated, I decided it was time to dispose of C-GNBB. I had also recently been appointed a director of Eastern Provincial Airways and received a free pass to fly with them at any time, so any pretended efficiency or economy from C-GNBB was then clearly a myth.

The story of selling C-GNBB is an interesting marketing exercise in itself. As a member of Associated Construction Distributors International, which was a valuable collaborative relationship among specialty construction distributors across North America, I had become friends with Wilbur Sensing of Memphis, Tennessee. He was a very successful businessman, unpretentious and genuine in his personality and manner, and a man who loved to fly. He was a few years older than myself, but even then had almost six thousand hours of flying time, all on single-engine aircraft. He had never had a multi-engine rating, so was naturally very impressed by a trip with me in C-GNBB while travelling to an ACDI meeting.

Having decided to sell the plane, I called Wilbur one evening and said, "My friend, I am going to do you a very great favour. We have decided to dispose of C-GNBB, and the best person in the world to own it is you. We are going to fly it to Memphis this weekend, and leave it with you for a month free of charge. At the end of that month, after you have used it as much as you like, we would ask you to either fly the plane back to us at Fredericton or send us a cheque for the purchase price."

"Oh Bud," Wilbur replied, "I don't think my wife would ever let me do that; she thinks I spend too much on flying already. But listen, why don't you send the plane down anyway, and I will enjoy flying it for a month before bringing it back to you."

Well, one month later I received a telephone call, "Bud, this is Wilbur, don't you think that cheque you have requested is a little too large, and couldn't we make it a better price?" That was a sure sign that we had a deal, although we did have to cut our asking price slightly. I feel sad to say that I have not seen C-GNBB since that time. I still have a sense of nostalgia when I think about that Beech Baron, perhaps like a summer cottage that has been sold, or an old friend who has passed away. Those two airplanes, C-GNBB and C-GSCV, represented a twenty-year period of great excitement, pleasure and fulfillment for my family and my business, but especially for me.

Chapter 6

The Bird-Stairs Merger

Following my retirement as Mayor in June of 1974, I returned to JWBCO full time and continued to work with old friends and fellow employees to build and expand the company. In that year JWBCO experienced almost twenty per cent growth in total revenues, exceeding $15 million in sales in a single year for the first time. Profit margins also increased, and when the physical inventory count was taken at the end of the year all controls were working well. The company had added almost a half-million dollars to its retained earnings during those twelve months, so by all accounts it was a wonderful year.

Toward the end of my tenure at City Hall, as my mind turned again to business, I began to think about expansion opportunities, especially in Nova Scotia. The idea of replicating the Neill acquisition with a similar one in Halifax was a tempting possibility, and so we targeted the historic firm of William Stairs Son and Morrow Limited, which appeared as almost a mirror image of the Neill business. This firm

as a traditional wholesaler of hardware, plumbing and electrical ıpplies with a very long history throughout Atlantic Canada, but ıpecially in Nova Scotia. In fact, the company's federal business charter as reportedly the second oldest in Canada, following only that of the udson Bay Company.

The initial attempt to acquire Stairs was made in late 1973, when met the ailing Arthur Stairs at his home in the prestigious residential ea of Halifax South. He was totally paralyzed, except for his lungs and is voice, lying on a makeshift bed on the dining room table, with a nurse anding by to place cigarettes in his lips for the one last enjoyment ailable to him, non-stop smoking. That was quite a moving experience ır me, to meet the sole remaining owner of Nova Scotia's oldest ıcorporated company in such a tragic situation.

His mind was sharp, and he knew exactly what the main issues ere. Did he want to sell the company to a New Brunswick competitor? Vould we, and could we, run it in the long and proud tradition of the airs business? Were we prepared to pay a fair price? Would we be able ı retain the management and the employees to whom Stairs felt a strong ɔligation? After assuring Arthur Stairs that I felt we could do all of these ıings, presuming a viable financing arrangement could be reached, the eeting ended. He suddenly became exhausted, and did not want to talk ırther. So there was no clear decision that day, but there were some ɔvious signals that he was comfortable about the idea of putting the airs company in our hands.

I was accompanied to that meeting by Charlie McLeod, who was en their company's comptroller and interim chief executive officer. The ext day, McLeod approached me privately to advise that he had been inking himself about buying Stairs and Morrow, and that he had already epared a plan for an effective acquisition of the business, one that would acceptable to the Stairs family. He would be willing to help me ıplement that plan, but in exchange he would wish to be employed on a ve-year contract to continue managing the company at a prescribed inimum salary, which at that time seemed like a very large commitment

well beyond any current pay scale in the JWBCO structure. For one reason or another I did not find his proposal acceptable, and told him that we would have to consider all jobs on the basis of merit and performance after we had acquired the Stairs business. My too-quick judgement and decision on that occasion turned out to be a million-dollar mistake.

In less than a week, we heard that separate negotiations were going on between Stairs and its employees, and very quickly a group of its managers led by Charlie McLeod had acquired ownership of the company. This was quite a severe disappointment to me, and I felt that Arthur Stairs had let me down based on the seeming intent we had during our discussions. In my heart, however, I realized that my naive and pious response to Charlie McLeod and the salary level he wanted was the real reason we had lost the deal. It showed that I did not have very much experience with sophisticated business practices, and also revealed a tendency in my makeup at that time (perhaps a little bit present even today) to be leery of high salary levels, at least until people were able to demonstrate through real performance that they deserved them. It was also evidence of caution and conservatism in a situation that I did not fully understand. Ordinarily, my nature is reasonably daring and bold when I think I know what I am doing – which obviously was not the case on that occasion.

I feel sure that Charlie McLeod and his senior managers had been able to purchase Stairs along the same lines as the deal that we had made for Neill's, which meant they had used very little of their own money to purchase assets, with a long term payback creating the working capital they needed to run the company. As well, given their knowledge of the inventory, receivables and other aspects of the company, they were able to buy it at exactly the right price. These were, of course, the kinds of advantages that Charlie McLeod had in mind when he offered his services. It would have been a good acquisition under those circumstances, and it was unfortunate that I had not had the presence of mind nor the experienced judgement at the time to take advantage of the opportunity that he had presented to us. Those events all occurred

in the early spring of 1974, and we likely should have accepted that lost chance and gone on in a different direction in Nova Scotia.

Instead however, our interest remained keen and we stayed in touch with the Stairs situation. After they had completed the acquisition, Charlie McLeod and his partners successfully ran the business for several months, but eventually sent out some signals through the Mercantile Bank that there was a continuing opportunity for us to buy the company from them. Negotiations were revived, and we did finally purchase the shares of the Stairs company from the management group in July of 1975. I have no evidence to support my estimate, but I do believe our cost was at least $1 million higher than it would have been the first time around. As events ultimately demonstrated over subsequent years, our decision to buy the company at all proved to be questionable, bringing with it obvious opportunities, but also in reality lots of difficulties and potential failures. I still have a file at home about the closing of that acquisition, which is labeled "Disaster Day 1975."

On July 5, 1975, when the transaction formally closed, our expectations were high and there was a sense that we had taken a major step forward. A grand dinner party of celebration was held at the Nova Scotian Hotel. I recall feeling that we had finally staked out our place in Nova Scotia, and looked forward with confidence that we would be participating in the future growth of that province, especially in the metropolitan area of Halifax. Indeed, the year 1975 did seem to be the pinnacle of success for JWBCO. Earlier in that year we had completed the acquisition of Goodco Construction Specialties and merged it with Bird Bridge Specialties Limited, having sales representatives by then located in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. Now, on top of that we had also completed the acquisition of William Stairs Son and Morrow Limited, which seemed a red-letter day for both companies.

In the first year after acquiring Stairs, the total sales of JWBCO reached more than $32 million and gross profit before taxes was almost $1.5 million. These were the highest numbers ever in the history of our

company, and well beyond my wildest dreams. At that moment we h more than two hundred and fifty employees; we had created a stro and growing company with potential for a wonderful future before u

Some adverse signals were soon being seen however. F example, in 1974 JWBCO had a remarkably high 6.8 per cent margin pre-tax profits on sales. This demonstrated the large content of special products in the JWBCO sales mix and the strong growth in pro margins associated with those products. In 1975, after Stairs had be consolidated into the results, a margin of only 4.5 per cent on sales w realized. To some extent this should have been recognized as a serio signal of more difficult days to come, when the newly consolidated Bi and Stairs operations would be generating much higher sales volum at much lower profit margins.

The very next year disaster did strike. Our sales declined abo ten per cent to just over $30 million, but profitability disappear completely and we posted a pre-tax loss of more than $1 million. In t space of only one year we had a change of profit performance fro $1.5 million in the black to $1 million in the red, a total reversal of mo than $2.5 million in just twelve months. We were in a state of shock, a in very short order the whole of JWBCO was in survival mode.

I had believed that the acquisition of Stairs in Halifax wou prove to be a major new threshold for the growth of JWBCO, and clear remember driving across the MacDonald Bridge one day shortly aft that acquisition with the grand thoughts that the whole metropolita area of Halifax was now within our grasp, where we had previously bee only a small player. It was easy to predict that metro Halifax was goi to become one of the great growth areas in the future of the Atlant Provinces. This has proved to be correct for the city, but unfortunate that was not to be the same for JWBCO. To the contrary, we ha seriously overestimated the quality of the Stairs operations, which ha some major inefficiencies we did not properly or promptly recogniz and then we compounded those weaknesses by very badly managing th merger with JWBCO.

We did many things wrong. Our first approach was to ematurely try to integrate the Stairs operation into JWBCO, much as : had successfully done with Neill's in Fredericton. We dispatched ırry Rumble to live in Halifax, and changed his role to general manager the Nova Scotia division of Bird-Stairs, with instructions to get Stairs the Bird computer system as quickly as possible. This turned out to a drastic strategic error, because the Stairs people were not nearly ady for that kind of rapid change, and it merely increased the efficiencies already prevalent in that company.

As well, we had great difficulty in identifying the leadership tential and the best performing employees within the Stairs ganization, and consequently made several errors in selecting pervisory personnel, and putting the wrong people in the wrong jobs. hindsight we should have let Stairs continue to run for at least a year more as a separate company, while we learned what that business was about. My judgement was flawed in steering the transition toward ımediate integration with JWBCO, but once the process was started it ıs impossible to stop and start over again.

Those difficult years, following the excitement and enthusiasm of e Stairs acquisition in 1975, wore sorely on both management and ıployee morale throughout the JWBCO organization. The pressure ɔm the Mercantile Bank was quite severe, although always reasonably commodating so long as we were taking management actions to keep ır declining business under control. One of the best of those actions was ken late in 1976 when Bird Holdings Ltd. recognized the significant lue of the *long term lease* in the Stairs building at 3667 Strawberry Hill, ıich was carried as an asset at no value on the Stairs balance sheet and d been merely merged into the JWBCO financial statements. This esented an opportunity for JWBCO to negotiate a transaction with HL that proved highly beneficial for both companies, because JWBCO eded cash for working capital purposes and BHL was a long term vestor in leasing property. The transaction was completed following an dependent appraisal of the value of the lease, for which BHL paid

$750,000 to JWBCO. This was a key and strategic piece of business between these two affiliated companies, greatly strengthening JWBCO's position, and was well received by our bank and other creditors. That support from BHL was critical at the time, and probably the main factor in helping JWBCO to remain solvent through the ensuing tough years of 1977 and 1978.

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Over the subsequent thirty years, that lease for 3667 Strawberry Hill has proven to be by far the most valuable asset acquired in the Stairs transaction. It was truly one of the most remarkable deals that any tenant ever made with a landlord. Signed in 1967 between Stairs and the late John Lindsay, Sr. for a large area of almost 95,000 square feet, at the very low rental rate of $0.85 per square foot per year on a net basis, for a full term of fifty years without change in the rental rate. The ownership of this lease came to JWBCO as one of the assets in the shares of the Stairs company. Because it was being fully utilized in the course of running the business, I don't think that we ever truly took note of the tremendous real estate value involved until the second year when financing innovation became a critical requirement. It became the most profitable element of the BHL real estate portfolio until 2008 when the lease was sold back to the owner, John Lindsay, Jr., for a net price of $1.3 million. After more than three decades of generating rental profits to BHL, the value of that lease by itself was worth nearly as much as was paid for the entire Stairs company in 1975. So I always take some comfort that the Stairs deal was ultimately not a total failure, and probably in fact very much a net success. In that regard, it is also important to note that today JWBCO has been able to successfully revive the plumbing and electrical operations in Halifax which are direct successors from the original company, so our original plan for long term penetration of that major market by the Stairs acquisition has ultimately been accomplished.

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We all worked very hard under great pressure for the next couple of years, with many changes introduced to cope with the difficulties we were encountering. For example, the wholesale hardware division of Stairs was sold off as a separate company to John Caines, their former vice-president in charge of those products. Unfortunately, it did not take very long for that new company to encounter its own difficulties, as it was probably one of the last expressions of the old traditional wholesale hardware business. The advances of modern marketing had quickly commenced to take over, with organizations like Canadian Tire controlling the retail hardware and tools business throughout the country without any further need for intermediary wholesale operations. I can think of many historic companies now no longer in existence that were once the powerhouses of the wholesale hardware industry. Some of them continue to operate successfully with their industrial, plumbing and electrical divisions, mainly because they are selling directly to contractors in such lines, but the traditional dealer sales functions for hardware, tools and most building supplies has changed forever.

The disposition of these lines to Caines helped to improve the working capital position of JWBCO, although many of those products had actually provided the highest profit margins in the previous Stairs history. Nevertheless, that was an important disposition because it returned the Bird-Stairs focus to most of those products with which it had been historically familiar through Neill's in New Brunswick. Other steps were soon taken to merge the Moncton branch of Stairs with the Bird business in that city, to blend the industrial products division in Halifax with other existing operations and finally, to close the Stairs branch at Sydney after spending several months attempting to justify a combined Bird-Stairs operation in that location.

Had it not been for all of those prompt and decisive actions in the face of serious challenges, the highly leveraged financial position of JWBCO would have been in serious jeopardy. Recognizing belatedly that the trend to eliminate the wholesale hardware function would eventually spread to other products in our industry, we slowly commenced to

develop direct sales policies for plumbing and electrical supplies which traditionally had been sold only through the major contractors in those trades. For example, at the Stairs building on Strawberry Hill, we opened a new plumbing and electrical showroom, encouraging builders homeowners and others to come in and buy directly. While our policy provided protection for key trade contractors in the event that we sold directly to one of their customers, we were quickly entering the retail business, a new plateau for JWBCO in certain product lines that has since prevailed very profitably.

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While spending my full time at the business, politics continued to beckon. Within a few months after leaving the Mayor's office, I decided to make a commitment and joined the Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick. As promised to Dr. Chalmers years earlier, I gave him first notice of this decision, and he was pleased because he liked the idea that I might eventually become his successor as MLA for Fredericton South. I had always associated conservatism with free enterprise, which was the pillar of my own business life, as well as with economic integrity and accountability. I felt that Conservatives created prosperity, while Liberals tended to spend its bounty. I perceived there to be a continuing cycle in political life: when the pantry was full, the Liberals emptied it; when the pantry was empty, the Conservatives were elected to fill it again.

One of my strongest concerns about government, even aside from party politics, had long been such philosophies as put forward by the Atlantic Development Board and later ACOA, that economic prosperity can be created up front by subsidizing and financing companies to go into business. As well intentioned as such concepts may be, I feel they are almost always misguided efforts to artificially create economic activity and prosperity. It has always been my belief that we should be rewarding companies for actual results, for performance and profitability, by offering them tax concessions or other such values, as opposed to donating start-up financial incentives for unproven businesses to hasten to their failures.

A classic case was the Bricklin adventure taken on by Premier ıard Hatfield and Malcolm Bricklin to create an automobile ıufacturing business in New Brunswick, based on the innovative gn of an untested sports car, financed by millions of dollars of New nswick money. In 1975 the Bricklin enterprise failed and the Hatfield ernment was at pains to explain the rationale and the justification for investments they had made in it with public money. It bothered me ıtly, as a then-declared Conservative, to see this happening, but it trated me even more when I attended the annual meeting of the PC ty on September 27, 1975 to hear Premier Richard Hatfield describe Bricklin investment as "a responsible effort at economic development."

I went to that annual meeting as an ordinary member of the ty, no longer holding any political office, but having prepared myself alk about economic development. I had given deep thought to the ic philosophy of the Bricklin fiasco, and others that had gone before While it was intimidating for me to consider speaking out in front of h a large audience, and confronting or criticizing a popular Premier governing party, I was resolved to address the issue. So, with the es I had prepared in advance, I addressed the full meeting as follows:

"Mr. Premier, with the greatest of respect, I must say to you that r description of the Bricklin gamble as merely another respectable ırt at economic development is just plain hogwash. It cannot go hallenged, or every New Brunswicker and every Conservative will identified with the bad judgement and fiscal irresponsibility to be n in the Bricklin situation."

After elaboration about the wrong philosophy of "giveaways for nomic growth", I concluded by making a formal motion for review l revision of economic development policies. Every delegate was so ensive about the Bricklin issue, however, that they missed the aning of my motion and I didn't even get a seconder.

When he was inspired, Hatfield had a flair for public speaking l this occasion was no exception. He responded by reviewing his family

history, including his father's success as an entrepreneur in the potato chip business, and he spoke for more than thirty minutes about his understanding of economic growth without once mentioning the Bricklin incident. In the end it was a sparkling political performance, and drew a rave response from the large audience. My day was over, and for a little while my name was mud in the Conservative Party, but I had made my point and I think the majority would have agreed after reflecting upon it even a few days later. The general media reaction was favourable, and most thought that my motion would have been a common sense action to take. As I left that meeting, I felt it highly unlikely that I would ever be welcome as an elected member of the Conservative Party.

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I must say that Richard Hatfield never seemed to be offended by objective disagreement, nor did he ever appear to hold a grudge, but it was always difficult to tell because he seldom talked to anyone closely, not even his best friends. One of the strangest people I ever knew, he was a masterful political leader who accomplished great things for New Brunswick, especially with the issues of bilingualism and biculturalism, but in reality he was a closet Liberal in Conservative clothing. That seems fair, because he was followed by Frank McKenna, who was an obvious Conservative in Liberal clothing.

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While my first priority in those years was to keep JWBCO in good health, I also carried a strong yearning to take another step in the political direction, even thinking casually at that time about the prospect of someday becoming Premier of New Brunswick. This was not a driving aspiration at the time, because I realized how big that job was, and that there would be lots of competition by good people ahead of me. However, I did have this dual ambition to be successful in business through JWBCO and at the same time to make a meaningful contribution through public service, as a way of balancing my life's work so as to make it count for worthwhile purposes. I guess I felt like many

people that, having had the good fortune to gain more than the average share of life's benefits, there is a moral obligation to try and give something back. A combined career in business and in politics has been a wonderful way for me to live in both of those worlds.

As 1978 approached, speculation grew that Premier Hatfield would soon be calling his third election and there was a sense he had a big challenge to be able to win. There were no particular major issues as I recall, but the Bricklin fiasco and some of his own peculiar approaches to certain issues appeared to be wearing out his welcome among the voters, and so going for a third term was not going to lead to an easy victory. My own interest continued to be quite keen, and I made sure to retain a public profile that kept my chances for the nomination in Fredericton at a reasonably high level, and I did not prematurely close any doors. Also, I made sure to stay in close contact with PC Party affairs in New Brunswick, and in fact was on my way to a major political event in Quispamsis on a January evening in 1978 when disaster struck on the Petersville Hill.

I had just returned from flying to Montreal on a business trip that day, and was proceeding directly by car from the Fredericton airport to a Conservative rally. At about 6 p.m. that evening, in the dusk of a relatively clear day, I drove my Jeep Wagoneer into the back end of a truckload of logs climbing the Petersville Hill. The next thing I knew, I was in an ambulance on the way to the Saint John General Hospital. The cause of the accident is even still hard for me to explain, except that I may have been mentally flying on auto-pilot. I do recall looking up just at the last moment before I hit the ends of the logs. I was travelling just above the speed limit, but of course the loaded truck was barely crawling up the hill.

When I arrived at the hospital the doctors thought at first glance that I should be, or would soon be, a fatality. With excellent medical care I was able to return home seven weeks later. I had suffered multiple face injuries, a twisted knee, a broken femur and a host of lesser injuries. I lost many pounds during the long stay at hospital, and when I was released my right leg would not bend and I could barely walk on my left knee. I remember going to the YMCA gymnasium on my crutches,

where I had worked out for so many years before this accident wondering if I would ever get back to doing so again.

On that very afternoon I pledged to myself that I would make i happen. Over many months I was back on that track, limping along a first, then walking more quickly and ultimately jogging again. There hav been very few days since that I have not carried out my daily exercis routine. As I recovered through the summer of 1978 my contribution t JWBCO was marginal, which reflected the good organization an management staff we had in place. As one diversion, I took more tha two weeks to paint the inside of our camp at Slate Island, washing an varnishing all the ceilings, boards and poles (they still shine even today) Throughout that difficult year the thoughts about entering provincia politics continued to occupy my mind.

By the end of the summer I was fully recovered and back to wor again. The affairs of JWBCO had continued to improve, and I wa especially pleased that our management team had performed extremel well and did not miss a single beat in my months of convalescenc following the accident. That gave me a renewed sense of confidence tha the company was in stable and healthy condition, and could likely continu to operate well without my management presence. Accordingly, I decide to become more aggressive about seeking the upcoming nomination.

As it became apparent that Premier Richard Hatfield would b calling an election in the fall of 1978, plans were laid for a nominatio meeting and, with the full support of the incumbent Dr. Everet Chalmers and most other members of the PC executive committee, I ha a clear opportunity to pursue that nomination unopposed. I had no received any direct encouragement from Premier Hatfield himself, no certainly any promise or indication of a cabinet position, but I felt quit confident that I could serve well, and the idea of taking another majo step back into public office was compelling.

More than any other point of decision in my lifetime, th prospective change from being president of JWBCO to becoming

ovincial cabinet minister was to be the defining moment of both my isiness and public service careers. If everything had worked out well, pecially all of the business plans executed as were expected to occur, it ight possibly have been conceivable to enjoy, at arm's length from one the other, the best of both worlds: a sound and lasting business mpany under professional management in trust for continued wnership by my family; and an equally successful political career, rhaps leading to the Premier's office in New Brunswick, the high point which I earnestly aspired at that time. Unfortunately, while I had epared quite well for the coming election and my new political life, id even though I had taken several important steps which I thought ould provide for continuing successful management of the business, e events of the next four years were to be very volatile indeed. They ought me eventual success and satisfaction from my term in the vernment of New Brunswick, but painful and long lasting distress and scouragement from the affairs of JWBCO.

In deciding to run for a seat in the Legislature, I did so knowing ll well that both morally and legally I would have to ensure there was solutely no perception that JWBCO would be profiting in its business fairs from my position in government. Recognizing the amount of utine business which JWBCO conducted with various government partments, and even before the Conflict of Interest Act had been ssed, I had determined it essential to become disassociated with VBCO operations completely. I decided to create a blind trust, into hich I would legally convey both the management and ownership of y business affairs.

Towards those ends of removing myself entirely from JWBCO, I proached a respected Fredericton businessman, Fred Beairsto, whom ad known in passing from childhood, and asked if he would be willing serve as the chairman of a group of trustees who I would appoint to n JWBCO in my absence. To my pleasant surprise and couragement, he seemed flattered at the request and quite quickly cepted the responsibility. Subsequently, I invited four other respected

business friends to join Fred as trustees, comprising the late Bob Eddy, the late Ken Bartlett, Gordon Simpson and Pete Mockler. These were men of demonstrated success and ability, and all had impeccable reputations for integrity. This was not a group that would merely be a screen of puppets to do what I told them; on the contrary, they were a group who would conduct their responsibilities to both the full intent and letter of the law, and would not allow me to influence them at all. To the extent of separating myself from the business affairs of JWBCO, I could not possibly have created a better or stronger barrier.

In the time that followed and almost until the date of the election, both Fred Beairsto and I spent a great deal of time together preparing for the transition in JWBCO. The first big decision was who would succeed me, and how would the top management responsibilities be shared. While Fred had agreed to voluntarily act as chairman, and more or less also as interim CEO, he had his own business to run and a family life to lead, so JWBCO needed a capable and experienced general manager who could successfully lead the company into its new independent era.

Sadly, it was in this critical area of identifying and selecting the new leadership that we all failed badly in our judgement, although I accept that the ultimate responsibility was mine alone. For reasons I still regret, no serious attempt was made to first look within the company for the top leadership we needed, but rather we naively assumed a new outside man was required who would bring qualifications and professionalism that supposedly was not in our ranks at that time. My own preliminary selection had been a young banker with the Mercantile in Halifax, who knew our account very well and saw an opportunity for himself in joining us in this senior position. However, after introducing him to Fred and discussing his qualifications with others, it was decided that we needed a person with broad business training and experience, not just in accounting and finance but also in marketing, and preferably one with a university education.

In our conversations a name arose with whom Fred and I were familiar – the late Sandy LeBlanc, who had originally been the IBM

representative on our account when we bought our first computer. He had graduated from UNB with a business degree, was then working for McCain Foods as a sales representative on USA accounts, and living in Fort Fairfield, Maine. He was an energetic and enthusiastic personality, an articulate and persuasive salesman, seemingly well liked by all who knew him and looked like the ideal individual for the job. On a Saturday morning Fred and I flew to the Houlton airport where Sandy met us, and in a few short hours we had persuaded him to take up the challenge and become the president of JWBCO.

In retrospect I cannot explain why a group of sophisticated business people such as Fred, our trustees and especially myself, did not take the time to more exhaustively test the market for other comparable and available individuals, perhaps even through a professional head-hunting firm, before making that important decision almost on the spur of the moment. Perhaps if we had done so, we might have come to take a closer look around us, and to at least consider the impact this new general manager was going to have on existing employees. That was a serious failure.

As I review those fateful days, I can hardly credit my lack of sensitivity to the team spirit of JWBCO which we had taken so long to build together, especially among the longer serving senior people. It seems I merely assumed their wholehearted support for my return to political life, and their acceptance that a new general manager would be recruited into the company. It now seems that my trustees and I were living in a sort of dream world that presumed the need for some "white knight" to replace me in my own company. How could we have not considered such people for that job who were already there or had not been long gone, such as Ray McGee, Brian Baxter, Reg McGee, or especially George Peppin and Geoff Munn? As these men have subsequently demonstrated in their careers, they certainly had the management abilities to run such an organization. With the teamwork at JWBCO that had prevailed in the past, any one of them could likely have kept the organization together and successfully sustained its profitable operations.

There is no doubt that I was inspired to follow the political cours I had chosen, and there is no regret in looking back upon that decisior My life has been enriched by my political experience, but the birth an growth of JWBCO had always been my primary life's work. Thus it i with a sense of sadness that I sometimes think about just how fa JWBCO might have gone if we had been able to keep our original tear together. Without question, whatever that potential might have been, it loss is one assessment of the cost for me of entering public political lif on a full-time basis.

Chapter 7

The New Brunswick Legislature

At the PC nomination meeting for Fredericton South in 1978 I was the only candidate, and was formally nominated by my friend Dr. Marven Palmer. Also in attendance was Dr. Chalmers, openly displaying his support. It was more like a coronation than a contest, but I think I delivered a reasonably good speech, and all the Conservative supporters went away with enthusiasm. There was a sense of succession from the distinguished MLA of the past generation to a promising MLA for the current one.

In the fall of that year, when Premier Hatfield called the election, I was standing in my waders in a salmon pool at Rocky Bend on the Miramichi River. Outfitter Clayton Stewart came down from the camp kitchen to holler, "Bud, come out of the water, your political campaign has started!" That ended the salmon fishing for 1978, and I embarked on my first partisan political campaign. It was far different from running for the Mayor's office.

This time, it was not merely Bud Bird running for Fredericton South; rather I was one of fifty-eight teammates with Richard Hatfield and the Progressive Conservative Party running to form the next government of New Brunswick. The whole effort in our own constituency had to be dovetailed and coordinated with the PC campaign throughout the province. Every statement had to be carefully prepared to ensure that there were no conflicts or contradictions with the position being taken by the Premier and the Party, and the theme of promotional and advertising activities had to be consistent as well.

I was running against Dr. Stephen Patterson of UNB, the Liberal candidate, a man with a bright mind and a sharp tongue, who had been one of the most aggressive members of the Heritage Trust organization when we were fighting the urban renewal battles at City Hall a few years earlier. There were certainly lots of strong feelings between his position and my own. The candidate for the New Democratic Party was Professor Alan Sharpe, also from UNB, a fine gentleman also with a good mind, and very much a socialist in his political points of view. These two opponents were not going to be pushovers by any means so, despite the PC incumbency in the riding, I worked very hard to make sure of winning that election.

On October 23, 1978, I was elected as the MLA for Fredericton South. The final results were satisfying for me – I received more than fifty-five per cent of the vote – but not so for the Hatfield government, which barely maintained a majority, with thirty PC seats and twenty-eight Liberal seats. Shortly thereafter, Hatfield made an historic political move by persuading one of the elected Liberal members, Robert McCready of Queens South, to become Speaker of the Legislature. This created great political furor, but McCready did become Speaker and served well, thus providing Hatfield and our caucus an additional vote to our slim majority, (really two more, because with the Speaker in the chair there were thirty PC votes versus twenty-seven Liberal votes).

Of course, the next big question following my election was whether Hatfield would have me in his cabinet. I reflected upon my

criticism two years previously about the Bricklin affair, and also was concerned that Hatfield might relate me too closely to the previous approach of Dr. Chalmers, who had been openly critical of him on many occasions. Nevertheless I was invited to meet with Hatfield and discuss future aspirations, where I told him frankly that I thought I could serve well in his cabinet, probably in finance or economic development because of my business background. A few days later the thought struck me that with my love for the outdoors, fishing, hunting and so on, the portfolio I might most enjoy would be Natural Resources, which I had not mentioned to him at all. Within hours, I received a telephone call and Richard Hatfield said, "Bud, I can't put you in finance or economic development because those positions are filled, but I would like to ask you to serve as the Minister of Natural Resources." Well, if he had been close at hand, I would have embraced him. I could not think of a better appointment, and went on for several years after that proclaiming it to be "the best public service job in all of New Brunswick." I meant it then, and looking back almost thirty years later, I still feel the same way now.

In my view, much of the quality of life in New Brunswick is all about our natural resources – our forests and the tremendous contribution which they have made throughout history to our economy; the beauty of our lakes, rivers and streams and the recreational opportunities which they provide to New Brunswickers; our fish and wildlife, with specific emphasis on the Atlantic salmon and how the state of these resources reflects the state of our environment; the mines and minerals with the significant employment which has been provided at places like Brunswick Mines near Bathurst and potash discoveries near Sussex; our geographic location in the world, where we are able to enjoy a climate that still clearly distinguishes the four seasons; the relatively modest size of our population, and the space we have to know ourselves and to enjoy one another – all of these abundant benefits from the natural world around New Brunswick provide us with a richness of life that simply does not exist in very many other places in the world.

While being Minister of Natural Resources did not touch on very one of these areas specifically, it was on the edge of them all in one ay or another, and gave me the feeling that I was responsible for what perceived to be the essence of our province. The job of helping to lead ıe Department of Natural Resources brought me satisfaction every day, ıd pride to be part of that team and other conservation groups both in ıe private and public sectors that have worked so diligently over all the ears to keep New Brunswick the treasure that it is. In a very real way, eing Minister of Natural Resources was like being in charge of the rovincial crown jewels.

The Crown lands of New Brunswick, and the forests of which they e substantially comprised, represent the highest priority in the sponsibilities of New Brunswick's Minister of Natural Resources. At that me the forestry sector of the province directly and indirectly contributed ıore than forty per cent of our gross economic output. Moreover, the erations of all our wood processing facilities – pulp and paper mills, wmills, shingle mills, waferboard plants and specialty woodworking ıops – were to some considerable extent dependent upon wood supply om Crown forests. In the years preceding my appointment to this ortfolio, a policy position had been developed by DNR to reorganize the location of Crown wood supply and review the overall management of rown forests. There had been growing recognition and concern that all New Brunswick's forests, both on public and private lands, were in great ed of more intensive forest management measures, and that the ailability of timber supply, especially softwood, would quickly become sufficient to meet the demands of all our mills within the coming enty years. Consequently after a great deal of research, including the eration of a pilot forestry project near Bathurst, it had been decided at sweeping new measures were required to better manage the forests the province. As a result, new legislation would be needed to provide e regulatory framework for doing so.

It was good fortune for me and a wonderful opportunity to arrive ı the scene just at that moment in the history of New Brunswick's

forests, and to become the minister charged with the responsibility of formulating the new policies and introducing the new legislation that would be necessary to implement them. As well of course, in order to be workable these policies would need to serve the requirements of our forest industries, and also provide for the preservation and use of our forests by all citizens of the province for aesthetic and recreational purposes. It was a big challenge, one that would almost need to please everybody, and of course trying to do that in any situation can be the quickest way to fail.

After some excellent briefings and preparation by Deputy Minister Rudy Hanusiak and his highly qualified staff, I felt well prepared to embark with them on this process. My first steps were a trial by fire. The announcement about the forest policy review was made in the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel one afternoon in late 1978, only a few weeks after I had been appointed minister. It was my task to advise the forest industry leaders that all existing Crown forestry licenses would be cancelled, and that a process of reallocation of Crown timber would take place over coming months. In the future, only those who were operating wood processing facilities in New Brunswick would receive allocations of Crown wood. Moreover, such allocations would be based on the principle of Crown wood as a source of last resort, after taking account of the ownership of private forest lands by each industry, and also the proportion of their requirements that could be acquired from small wood producers around the province. This was a revolutionary kind of announcement, and it provoked anger and passion among many players in New Brunswick's forest industry who were present that day, not the least of whom was James K. Irving, the president of J.D. Irving, Limited, who was there with his son Jim and Dave Oxley, their woodlands manager.

No sooner had I left the podium after making the announcement than I was confronted by J.K. (as he is respectfully known throughout the industry), a man of large physical presence and an explosive temper, and one who does not mince his words. "Listen young fellow," J.K. said, "what the hell are you trying to do here? What do you know about the

forest industry of New Brunswick? We are not going to stand by and allow you to cancel our Crown forest licenses! We will fight you every step of the way!" Actually, I think J.K. spoke even more strongly than that, and I recall fearing for just a moment that he was going to slug me. Thank goodness, however, Rudy Hanusiak was by my side, and was accustomed to confrontations with J.K. and knew how to handle the situation. It was not long until tempers cooled, and I had the presence of mind to assure the Irvings and all the other industry leaders that they would be consulted on every issue throughout the process. As it turned out the concept of close consultation became the key to the successful development of the policies, and to the eventual composition of the new Crown Lands and Forests Act.

Many of the principles for the new policy had been well conceived by DNR, under the guidance of my predecessor Hon. Roland Boudreau, and were relatively simple and straightforward. First, Crown timber would only be available to wood processing facilities within New Brunswick, based on the production requirements of each plant. No longer would Crown timber be available to companies or contractors simply for resale, or for export from the province, or for any other purpose except the adding of higher value to the processing of the timber within provincial facilities. Secondly, Crown timber would be allocated to each industry on the basis of need, after considering availability of supply from their own private lands, both those owned by large industry companies such as Fraser and Irving, and from smaller woodlot owners as well. Thirdly, the predicted future shortcoming of wood supply would be shared proportionately and equitably by all our forest industries, so there was an incentive to manage both the forests and the wood processing plants so as to most efficiently use the supply that did exist. Most importantly, there would be new measures of intensive forest management introduced under the direct control of DNR as custodian of the Crown forests, to maximize both future wood supply and to serve the multiple-use interests in our forests for all New Brunswick citizens.

The big question was how to implement those policies over the coming months and years, both in the forests and on the written page in the Legislature. To start, a logical formula for the allocation of Crown timber had to be negotiated with every single wood processing facility. Fortunately, a good move on this concept had already been made by DNR and all of the historical data about wood utilization, production and private sources of supply had been tabulated.

Next, and this was the most critical debate between DNR staff and myself as minister: who should be responsible for managing the Crown forests on the ground? There were some heated and vigorous arguments with Rudy Hanusiak and his senior people about that question, because they had assumed that DNR should take direct day-to-day control of the forests, managing the harvest operations to supply allocations as required. However, my own view, supported by consultations with industry, was that government should set the specifications for forest management, and should monitor and control the use of the forests within those specifications from a high level, but industry was best prepared by practical experience, capability and efficiency to manage and conduct the harvesting operations directly on the ground. Moreover, by delegating these responsibilities to industry, government would be in a position to keep score on the management results achieved, and to impose both incentives and penalties for good or bad management.

In the end there was consensus about the management approach, which was to delegate prime management responsibility to the largest and most capable industry companies (licensees) by way of long term twenty-five-year licenses, with five-year management plans and annual one-year cutting and silviculture schedules. As well, each licensee would be responsible for providing the timber supply required by all the smaller mills and plants (sub-licensees), whose wood allocation rights were also clearly defined. There were obviously lots of complications to be resolved, such as the sharing of costs for roads, silvicultural expenses and other management contingencies. Through consultation between

)NR and the forest industries, all these details were addressed, and an ffective structure of relationships between DNR, licensees and sub-censees was captured in a contractual format. The process has worked easonably well since that time.

Early on in the consultation process Rudy Hanusiak and I orked closely together in defining and achieving two important bjectives. First, we agreed to invite the major players in New runswick's forest industry – the CEOs of each licensee and larger sub-censee – to sit at the consulting table with us on a regular basis in what e defined as the project's "super task force." Secondly, to fill the need for senior assistant deputy minister with all the skill and knowledge equired to direct the implementation of the new legislation, we ersuaded Dr. Gordon Baskerville to give up his post as Dean of Forestry t UNB on a five-year leave of absence, and to join us as a key anagement member of the super task force.

Both of these moves were critical, and both were extremely uccessful in helping to plan and formulate the Crown Lands and orests Act over a period of less than two years. It was a proud day for ll concerned on July 16, 1980, when that legislation received Royal ssent. The provisions with respect to cancellation of then existing rown lands leases and timber licenses were effective immediately, with ne balance of the Act to come into force on March 31, 1982. Hailed by any as the best piece of forest management legislation of any urisdiction in the country, it has stood the test of time and many allenges. It remains today a very effective way of having New runswick's forests managed by those companies that are most reliant pon them; while the management criteria and the long term goals for ose public forests are specified, monitored and supervised by the epartment of Natural Resources on behalf of the government and the eople of New Brunswick.

During the course of my role as Minister of Natural Resources, articularly in the formulation and the passing of the Crown Lands and orests Act, I had the opportunity to become closely involved with

virtually every CEO of forestry and mining corporations who were doing business in New Brunswick. In fact, over the three-year period that the provisions of that new legislation were discussed and debated in consultation with industry leaders, the so-called super task force met every month or two. One of the great achievements in this process was being able to bring all of these industry competitors together with government in a common cause. Everybody had an important stake, because there was a perceived shortage of wood supply to come over the next twenty years, so that helped to make the process cooperative instead of competitive. After I had returned to my own business career, I had the good fortune to retain contacts and friendships with several of these people, from both government and industry, and I think we continue to share a sense of having been teammates on a very important and successful public mission.

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I must especially single out Rudy Hanusiak and Gordon Baskerville for the very large contributions each of them made to development and implementation of the Crown Lands and Forests Act. As deputy minister, Rudy set the stage for all the changes that needed to be made, and it was his drive and determination that got the project started and gave it momentum. As a visiting assistant deputy minister, Gordon brought his superb forest research experience and intensive management insights to the deliberations, and his role was critical to planning the successful implementation of the new legislation on the ground and in the forests. The Province of New Brunswick could not have been better served by two such dedicated, capable and responsible individuals.

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Soon after my appointment as Minister of Natural Resources, I began to think about the protection and preservation of our precious Atlantic salmon resource, in rivers like the Miramichi, the Restigouche and even the historic St. John, which had not then yet been closed to

salmon fishing. In 1978, commercial net fishing was still reaping a major harvest throughout Atlantic Canada, and the fish were measured in *tonnes* for commercial purposes, and by trophy size and number of kills each day by recreational anglers. It seemed clear to me that stocks were already in such trouble that we had to start measuring these fish one at a time, and dealing in specifics like *each*, instead of *tonnes* or *pounds* or *dozens*.

So with the opportunity to take action as Minister at DNR, I helped initiate the first harvest tagging system in the spring of 1980, so that all salmon and grilse would be physically and individually identified in determining legal possession, quota allocations and even commercial bycatch. That was followed a year later with catch-and-release regulations for all large salmon, at which point harvest tags became applicable for grilse only. Those new regulations and practices quickly spread to jurisdictions in other provinces and countries, so New Brunswick provided some real leadership in bringing effective harvest controls to Atlantic salmon fishing. These had immediate beneficial impacts on the control of both recreational and commercial harvests, and especially on the black market for salmon sales, because it was then illegal to have possession of any salmon without a tag. The introduction of these measures met with some initial snags and concerns, and I clearly remember an urgent telephone call on the first morning of the 1980 salmon season from an outfitter, the late Herb Wade, who proclaimed, "Bud, the damn tags don't stick!" The first design had used an adhesive to bind the tag around the tail of the fish, and the adhesive didn't work: but the main thing was to have the tag on the fish, even if the tag had to be tied in a knot. In a few days, the concept caught on and was generally welcomed by the conservation community.

I have always valued a letter from the late Dr. Wilfred Carter of the Atlantic Salmon Federation dated July 8, 1980, in which he said:

"The tagging legislation has already served to plug a major loophole in the purchase, sale and transportation of Atlantic salmon which should not have been available for market. ASF has believed for

some time that a substantial part of the answer to poaching lies in tightening marketing and transportation regulations so that it become more difficult to offer illegally obtained salmon for sale. Your legislation has shown this to be an accurate assumption because in one instance this year the price of black market salmon dropped from $4.00 a pound to $0.50 a pound in an effort to move stocks of salmon that had been prevented access to their normal markets by your legislation."

In my view the decision introduced at the beginning of the 1980 season for a harvest tag to be fixed to every salmon has proven to be one of the most important of all the innovations and measures taken to conserve this great fish. It not only made it illegal to possess an untagged salmon – which effectively diminished the incentive for illegal poaching and sales – but it also had an immediate impact on recording and retention of incidental salmon catches by commercial fishermen, which had long been suspected as a significant source of excess harvests. Even in the early years of the aquaculture industry, farmed salmon were tagged before going to market. It was only after a difficult debate several years later that the aquaculture industry was relieved of the need for tagging based on the high costs of doing so, and with the assurance that their marketing systems directly through wholesalers and retailers would allow for tight control of the product. The exemption of the aquaculture industry from tagging has somewhat compromised and weakened the overall effectiveness of the system, but thankfully tags continue to be used very diligently by anglers for wild fish, and are monitored and controlled by enforcement officers.

Another major management decision taken for Atlantic salmon was the ban on killing large salmon. In that very first season I served as Minister of Natural Resources, it became woefully apparent by mid-summer of 1979 that stocks of large salmon were in very short supply in almost all rivers. Since those big mostly female fish constitute the main spawning component in any run, their preservation was vital to sustain the restoration process in future years. Serious action had to be taken. The first thought was to completely close the rivers, but this would have

d a major adverse impact on the economic lives of guides and tfitters, so it was decided to leave the grilse component of the run ailable for angling, but to totally stop the killing of all large salmon.

With the collaboration of the federal Department of Fisheries d Oceans the salmon ban was introduced on August 1, 1979, initially a voluntary basis because it was impossible to have precise federal gislation ready for proclamation that quickly. For the most part, this luntary ban was well accepted and practiced by anglers, and by the ne the 1980 season came along the ban had become law. For all of the ars since that time it has been illegal to kill a large salmon in New unswick, and all such catches must be returned to the river alive. For little while it was felt this would discourage salmon anglers from acticing their sport, unable to take a trophy home, but in fact almost y salmon fisherman today would tell you that catch-and-release ubles the enjoyment of salmon fishing. First, the thrill of the strike d the exciting fight, then followed by the deep satisfaction of carefully turning a spawning salmon to the river so as to perpetuate this nderful resource for future generations.

My first year as Minister in 1979 was indeed a busy one in almost l respects, but none more so than in salmon conservation. During that e year we decided to reorganize Crown Reserve angling waters and ases, with the intention of establishing more spawning sanctuaries in ajor rivers, but also making more Crown Reserve water available to ew Brunswick anglers. The number of Crown Angling Leases was duced from twenty-five to twenty, and the five new available stretches ere divided between sanctuaries and new Crown Reserve water. In so ing we reaffirmed the long established policy of having a deliberate versification in the allocation of Crown waters in New Brunswick – a itical portion for sanctuaries; some reasonable access for open fishing; selective schedule of Crown Reserve waters; and a few stretches for ng term Crown Leases. This policy has long provided an effective lance in the allocation and use of government-owned fishing waters, d continues to this day.

During the course of my four years as Minister at DNR, in addition to the major steps taken with respect to salmon conservation, a thorough review was conducted of all hunting, fishing, trapping and other activities covered by the Fish and Wildlife Act. Eventually, we introduced a comprehensive range of changes to thoroughly update and renew that important legislation.

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One of the good DNR stories at my expense, one that still brings laughs among fish and wildlife officers in New Brunswick, has to do with the annual moose hunting draw. In order to manage the herd of moose in the province, a scientifically allocated number of these animals is allowed to be hunted each year during a short three-day season, so aspiring moose hunters enter their names early in hopes of being picked for a license in the annual Moose Draw. This was something I had been applying for unsuccessfully over many years, so in 1981 the news spread quickly around DNR and elsewhere in the community that I had the good fortune to be drawn for a license. Of course there is always a lot of cynicism and skepticism about the names that do get drawn, so I feel sure that most hunters in the province thought it was a fix for the minister, and perhaps even some of the DNR officers shared that perception. It was not true, of course, and in fact I had lost some interest in going moose hunting because of time pressures that year, but now it had become a topic for conversation and everyone was watching closely to see how I made out.

Even after being drawn it is still necessary to take a series of tests before the license is actually issued, one of them being to demonstrate your shooting accuracy for safety reasons. I had forgotten about this until one day around noon, while in my office at the Centennial Building, there was a call from the Fish and Wildlife Branch to tell me it was the last day for the test or my license would lapse. They urged me to come to the gravel pit in the Marysville area where the shooting tests were being conducted, and they seemed quite anxious that I qualify for my license. Without bothering to change from my suit and tie, I went

home to pick up my rifle and drove directly to the test site. It was the first time I had had the rifle out of the case in more than a year, and had taken no practice at all. Not being a very good shot anyway, I proceeded to miss two of the three shots that were required to pass the test, and so horror of horrors, the Minister of Natural Resources had failed to qualify in such a simple way for his moose hunting license.

The uniformed fish and wildlife officers at the scene were shocked and embarrassed, and the first reaction was to say "Mr. Minister, why don't you try it again?" As much as I would have liked to have done so, because I was also embarrassed at my ridiculous shooting performance, there was never a shred of doubt in my mind that the test was over. So I quickly thanked them all, got into my car and went back to work at the office. For a while there was a passing sense of humiliation and embarrassment which reflected through the whole department, but I treated it as a big awkward joke and pretty soon it became a laughing matter which I think remains to this day. The word has been out to the Premier's office ever since, "Don't appoint anyone as Minister of Natural Resources unless you know they can shoot well enough to pass the moose test!"

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Of all the challenges and responsibilities in my four years as Minister of Natural Resources, none were so constant, contentious and controversial as the protection of our forests against the ravages of the spruce budworm. By way of prior history, the so-called "battle of the budworm" was started almost thirty years before my involvement, when foresters confirmed in 1949 an alarming increase in the population of spruce budworms in the balsam and spruce forests of northern New Brunswick. Up to that time there was no known way of stopping a budworm epidemic. The budworm could only destroy itself – by first destroying the entire forest on which it feeds. New Brunswick could simply not afford to allow such destruction of its forests to take place, so a major undertaking was organized to try and stop the impact of the budworm's destructive harvest, or at least to substantially reduce it. The budworm was

vulnerable to aerial spraying of insecticides for only a brief period in earl June when it is feeding; so a massive attack had to be carried out in a ver short time, requiring months of preparation in advance. After consultatio between the forest industry and the government of New Brunswick, decision was taken in September of 1951 for the New Brunswic International Paper Company to organize one experimental operation t spray 200,000 acres in the Upsalquitch watershed during the budworm feeding period in June of 1952. This decision launched a major eight-mont preparation between foresters, aviation experts and entomologist including construction of a new airport in the middle of the spray are deep in the Upsalquitch forest, which quickly became known as Budworn City. On June 13, 1952, entomologists reported the insects at the prope stage of development; then at 3 a.m. on June 14th the weatherma answered the sprayer's prayer, "no wind - no rain", and at daylight the firs ever New Brunswick budworm spray program took off.

The initial results were impressive, with entomologists estimatin almost total elimination of budworm populations in the areas that ha been sprayed. Unfortunately that early spray program had used DDT as it insecticide, and in later years it was discovered that not only wer budworms killed, but also there was an immeasurable impact on othe species of birds, fish and wildlife. Nevertheless, based on the perceive success of this first budworm spray project, it was decided by th government of New Brunswick, in consultation with the four major pape companies holding timber licences at that time in the budworm infeste areas, that a larger long term plan would be developed to battle th budworm epidemic on an annual basis. Arrangements were quickl initiated to spray at least one million acres of heavily infested provincia forests in the spring of 1953. A new non-profit corporation, Fores Protection Limited, was formed and charged with this gigantic task. 1 required the construction of six new airstrips in the forests throughout Nev Brunswick, and a fleet of eighty planes was organized. It was felt by al concerned that no forest management decision had ever held greate promise for New Brunswick and for Canada, than this historic endeavou to save an entire forest from an insect epidemic, one which could possibl

agger the economy of the whole province, and even impact seriously on e country itself.

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In early January of 1979, twenty-seven years after the original ray program was launched, but only shortly after becoming the inister of Natural Resources, it was my responsibility to announce that ew Brunswick would be spraying four million acres against the spruce idworm that year, at an estimated cost of $9 million. We all realized at the budworm could not be eradicated, but its growth and evastation could be controlled in a managed way. (One analogy was at, in the same manner that insulin does not cure diabetes but keeps e patient alive for a long life, so too did the budworm spray program ep the forests of New Brunswick near their productive capacity, while t completely curing the infestation). My announcement also said that e program would include an experimental spray of forests within the ne-mile buffer zone that previously had been designated as a non-spray ea around permanent habitation. The buffer zone had been a ntroversial subject in the past, with anti-spray pressure groups asking at the buffer be *enlarged*, whereas private woodlot owners who owned ost of the forested areas in the buffer zone were demanding that it be *creased* to ensure that their holdings would be included in the spray ogram. The grim reality was that the budworm was damaging smaller oodlots near inhabited areas as well, and the goal of the experiment as to reduce the one-mile limit to a quarter-mile.

That was only one of the sensitive issues; public health was the erriding concern. A couple of months later in March of 1979, the New unswick Pesticide Advisory Board announced a public hearing about e use of the insecticide Matacil in that year's spruce budworm spray fensive. Extensive previous testing of DDT had caused that chemical to eliminated from the program, and an intensive protocol of scientific sting and federal/provincial registration had been established in efforts ensure the absolute safety of insecticides to humans and other wildlife ecies. Matacil had been one of the insecticides previously approved

and used in the program, and was intended again for 1979. However, as was constantly happening with the budworm issue, critics from all sides were uncovering tests or reports that cast doubt upon one chemical after another. For me as Minister it was a very serious and sensitive responsibility to try and be sure that FPL operations were not using unsafe chemicals in their spray applications.

In that same month of March the Liberal Opposition Leader, Joseph Daigle, called for the proposed use of Matacil to be cancelled, because a federal report had suggested that a solvent used in Matacil was toxic and could threaten the province's Atlantic salmon resource. Without hesitation, when it was suggested that the solvent nonylphenol might be deadly to salmon, I challenged FPL to prove otherwise or find an alternative that was acceptable. Knowing virtually nothing about these chemicals myself, nor about the extensive scientific testing process that proved their acceptability, these issues were a constant source of serious concern to me, as they were to all senior managers in the Department of Natural Resources. We spent a great deal of time over the years reassuring New Brunswick citizens, as well as ourselves, that the budworm spray program would be stopped in its tracks if there was ever valid proof that the aerial spraying being carried out was harmful to human health. This was an assurance we had not made lightly, and one we intended to keep if justified by sound scientific evidence to do so.

Meanwhile, of course, DNR had as its primary responsibility the care and sound management of our provincial forests, more than half of which are owned by the citizens of New Brunswick as Crown lands. This was a treacherous balancing act, one that consumed a great deal of time and attention and much debate both in the Legislature and in the media over all of the time that I held that office. Make no mistake, though, I found it interesting and challenging, and in the end very satisfying that we were able to slowly win the battle with the budworm to save our forests and to do so without a single proven incident of harm to human health.

The conflicts brought by the budworm were fought around the cabinet table as well. For example, Eric Kipping, Minister of the

Environment and Brenda Robertson, Minister of Health, were both legitimately concerned with their own responsibilities and fearful that the aerial spray program could cause serious problems within their mandates. There was an impasse in the spring of 1982, when Brenda became alarmed about a reported link between the spray insecticides and a rare children's disease called Reye's syndrome. There was a cabinet crisis: the spray program was set to go in early June under my auspices as Minister of Natural Resources, to cover almost five and one-half million acres at a total cost of $17 million; yet the concerns of the Minister of Health could not be ignored, and we could not proceed if faced with her outright opposition.

With Premier Hatfield acting as mediator, it was agreed that a special medical task force would be engaged, led by Dr. Walter Spitzer of McGill University, involving a team of experts to thoroughly research the question of the spray program and Reye's syndrome. In its report to the Legislature at the beginning of May in 1982, Spitzer firmly rejected any such linkage, although he did make some recommendations to improve the formulation of the chemicals being used. This was good news for me, because the spray program had been advanced almost too far to cancel, and Brenda Robertson was now satisfied with the expertise and the advice of the scientific panel. I was especially relieved that such a prestigious and large group of experts had determined we were safely fulfilling our stated goal to manage the forests and protect against the budworm, while also confirming that the health of New Brunswick citizens remained our highest absolute priority. I should add that, for a neophyte like myself in matters of forest insects, aerial spraying, chemicals and insecticides, it would have been impossible to cope with all of those public ministerial responsibilities without the able assistance of senior DNR staff, and also FPL President Bud Irving, who all played very substantial roles in helping to direct the budworm battle successfully and well.

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During my term as Minister, a proposal emerged to create a centre of excellence in forestry to be established in the Fredericton area.

There were extensive discussions among senior staff at DNR, and also consultations with education leaders at UNB and with senior managers in industry. I played my part by raising and promoting the concept with Premier Hatfield and our cabinet colleagues, and we began to lay out a plan that would locate such a forestry complex on a parcel of UNB woodlot land along the Vanier Highway, with its entrance from the Regent Street extension. The concept would require purchasing approximately 65 acres from UNB's woodlot, which was very valuable almost hallowed forest-training land. It would require an Act of the Legislature to get it all done. The vision was drafted in the form of the Maritime Forestry Complex Corporation Act, which I eventually introduced in the Legislature and which received Royal Assent on July 16, 1980, coincidentally the same date as for the Crown Lands and Forests Act. Prior to that being achieved, extensive negotiations were conducted with Dr. Jim Downey, then president of UNB, to arrive at suitable compensation arrangements for the sale of the required land. Eventually agreement was reached, with the purchase price including the transfer to UNB of 2,000 acres of Crown land near the federal research forest on the Richibucto Road. This transaction gave UNB a large increase in its ownership of forest land for long term educational and scientific purposes.

Up to that time, UNB woodlot lands had been considered virtually untouchable. However, there were compelling community planning reasons for some of that land to be developed, not to mention its immense commercial potential which would in subsequent years prove highly valuable to UNB. As it has turned out, the Forestry Complex transaction provided UNB with a large new area of forest land which has helped to reconcile partial loss of the woodlot to development. The later leasing of woodlot lands adjacent to the Forestry Complex for creation of the Knowledge Park has also helped to inspire development activities now being conducted by UNB on a commercial basis. Thus, the Forestry Complex transaction was received as a good piece of work for all concerned, with far reaching benefits for both the community and for UNB.

The Forestry Complex brings four distinct elements of excellence gether. The University of New Brunswick, with its wood science centre, s for many decades been considered the finest forestry school in nada, and has turned out professionals who continue to be forestry ders in almost every other province across the country. The Maritimes rest Ranger School, separate but affiliated with UNB, has long been a ghly successful technical school for students from the entire Atlantic gion. In areas such as forest management, the New Brunswick partment of Natural Resources has introduced daring and intensive itiatives such as the budworm spray program already described, and e new Crown Lands and Forests Act being introduced at that time. At e federal level, Forestry Canada has a major presence with its regional fice and senior staff located at the centre in Fredericton.

In due course, the Forestry Complex was named in honour of mer Premier Hugh John Flemming, and now consists of an impressive ray of office buildings, laboratories, classrooms, and even a model wmill. It truly is a centre of excellence in forestry, occupied jointly by e provincial Department of Natural Resources, the federal Forestry nada centre, the wood science laboratories of UNB and the Maritime rest Ranger School. While my own time as Minister had passed almost fore construction was commenced, it has always been a great source pride and satisfaction to me, having been deeply involved in its ginning. Although I missed the official opening (because of poor ing weather, I was grounded in northern New Brunswick) I remain noured to know that my name is on the legislation that created it.

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Without any doubt, one of the most emotionally difficult periods my political career began in mid-September of 1980 and continued thout relief until the first week of May in 1981. During that time, I was nstantly profiled in the media and relentlessly attacked by the Liberal pposition in the Legislature for appearing to have been in a conflict of terest position when I entered the provincial government and cabinet November of 1978, and for having been the direct beneficiary of

legislation in 1979 and 1980 that legally removed that conflict. This became a front-page issue, and a bitterly contentious one, with the publication of a letter written on July 29, 1980 by Mr. Justice J. Paul Barry, resigning from his designated role as the judge to receive declarations and issue rulings under the Conflict of Interest Act. In his strongly worded letter to the Chief Justice of New Brunswick, Judge Barry advised that he had recently received amended versions of that legislation which he called, "a farce, and I desire to be relieved of this situation at once. I will not be used to give an aura of respectability to what I consider improper."

The public release of that letter was an instant political bombshell, exploding clearly in my face, and to a lesser extent in that of Premier Richard Hatfield. The implications were very negative, because both of us were described in Judge Barry's letter as having made "honest declarations", but were nevertheless deemed in violation of the Act at that time. Barry pointed out that he had met with me on at least two occasions, once with my own lawyer present, and the conflict was the fact that I was "a surety" for my company which did a substantial amount of business with the government of New Brunswick. Now however, Judge Barry said, "the Act was amended to make this fact legal."

I was in a high state of anxiety as to what I should do. It so happened that the Conservative caucus was having a planning retreat on Campobello Island that weekend, and I clearly remember Richard Hatfield's first instructions to me: "Don't read the newspapers!" In retrospect, that is an amusing example of the manner in which he was always able to remain cool and composed over the most extreme of issues, but at that time I was far too upset to think it was funny. In fact, it was the Premier's confident assurance two years earlier that seemed to me clearly the cause of this situation. So I was even more perplexed at his attitude of business-as-usual that day, while also torn about the furious controversy that was developing for me personally.

It had all started in September of 1978, when I was preparing my affairs to run for the Conservatives. Part of the preparation involved being totally removed from the operations of my company. There was

one element of my position from which I could not be relieved however, and over which I had no control, that being the personal guarantee which had been signed and put in place by me years earlier on the borrowings of JWBCO from its bank. That was not a linkage that gave me any control over the operations of the company, but it certainly held me responsible as guarantor of its financial obligations if a demand from the bank ever came to be required. In a practical manner of thinking, that guarantee did not provide a way in which I could exercise any influence over the business, (except to hope that it would be doing well as were my feelings even with the shares in trust). Nevertheless, when reading the Conflict of Interest Act, it stated clearly that being "a surety" for a company would be deemed a conflict, so I realized this matter had to be resolved or I would not be able to qualify for office.

Therefore, on September 22, 1978, before an election had been called, I contacted Premier Hatfield to point out this difficulty, and he encouraged me not to be concerned because that was not the intent of the legislation and it would be clarified. Even more important was his advice that the Conflict of Interest Act had not officially been *proclaimed* by the government, and therefore was not legally in effect. There were other areas, he said, where amendments were also required to make the legislation applicable in the manner the government intended. The Premier was very clear in these respects, and encouraged me to continue with my plans to run for election if that was what I wished to do.

On October 31, 1978, after being elected, I formally confirmed to the Premier in writing a disclosure of all my interests, specifically including the fact that I was a guarantor for JWBCO with the Mercantile Bank of Canada. My official declaration to Judge Barry under the Conflict of Interest Act did not take place until March 6, 1979, but in it I made clear reference to both of my earlier disclosures to the Premier. It was more than sixteen months later when Mr. Justice Barry officially voiced his frustration and submitted his resignation. During that intervening time, I had sought and received informal meetings with him to discuss the prospective conflicts in my situation and the various

options which might be appropriate and available to resolve them. The spirit of those discussions had alternated between extremes of patience and impatience on the part of Judge Barry, but on the whole they were cooperative and helpful. At no point up to the time of his resignation had he seen fit to make a formal ruling about my position, and I believed and understood that appropriate actions had been taken to satisfy any concerns which had been expressed informally.

In his official correspondence to the Chief Justice, and to me personally on previous occasions, Judge Barry had described my disclosures of interest as being comprehensive and completely honest. What in the end apparently brought him to resign was frustration that amendments to sections of the Act had made the circumstance of my position as a guarantor of JWBCO acceptable, whereas he would originally have perceived it to be in conflict. Looking back, however, it still seems to me that the long delay from my original declaration until his resignation is evidence that he was expecting an eventual and effective resolution to the matter, much as it did occur. Why he was then provoked to resign and publicly criticize, when he had never issued a formal ruling of conflict, remains a mystery to me. In any event, his actions certainly did create some very trying times over the days and months that followed.

While Judge Barry's letter of resignation had not become public until September 15th, when *The Daily Gleaner* published a leaked copy of it, I had been in contact with the judge through July and August so was aware of his resignation and the reasons for it. On August 28th, therefore, I had written a letter to Chief Justice Adrien Cormier to refute the inference and implication of Judge Barry's remarks, and to provide a comprehensive summary of my own position. Once the matter had become public, at a press conference of my own on September 18th, I released the full text of that letter to the media. The letter read:

"To the contrary however, my legal advice confirms an opinion that the blind trust which I have established is effective in fact, and goes beyond the requirements of the Act in its fulfilment of them."

"I understand and respect that it is the role of the designated lge to make a formal ruling on such issues, with instructions for rection, to which a person may conform or appeal. Certainly, I intend respect and conform to all of the laws of this province, including the nflict of Interest Act. If the blind trust or any other arrangements ich I have made are deemed unacceptable under the Act, and if I am able to resolve them satisfactorily, then I am prepared to resign from Legislature. Both Judge Barry and the Premier should be well aware, m my previous discussions, of my position in this respect."

"Following our informal discussions, as I have stated, no formal ing on my position under the Act has been made by Judge Barry to ich I could further respond or appeal. However, in my view, by igning his position under the Act accompanied by statements that ply a judgement of conflict without in fact making one formally, pears to have left me with an image of guilt which I can neither fend nor appeal through the due process of law. Again, I must firmly ect any such impressions concerning me that Judge Barry's ignation may infer."

"In due course, I look forward to the opportunity of resolving se matters in a proper and lawful way with the respective judge as y be designated as the authority under the Conflict of Interest Act."

Eventually, Mr. Justice Ronald C. Stevenson was designated as new judge to oversee the Conflict of Interest Act. On May 5, 1981, I eived a letter from him advising that he had examined my submission d found that I was not in breach of any provision of the Act. I was ppy and relieved to receive this formal response, confirming that my nd trust arrangements had been found valid and acceptable. I felt dicated and, after many months of turmoil and torment, this case for was closed satisfactorily.

In retrospect, I suppose it was naive of me to accept the Premier's nfidence that the fine line of the legislation not being proclaimed was fensible, but apparently at that moment my position was within the

law. It also invites some cynicism that he was so positive the proposed amendments would be passed, which I recall did occur unanimously and without debate. In the end, however, the controversy was damaging to my own reputation, and I would never allow myself to go through such embarrassing and demeaning events again.

While my position was entirely within the letter of the law, and despite the Premier's encouragement and assurances, I should have insisted upon a firm ruling by Judge Barry even before seeking the nomination. As much as I enjoyed serving as Minister of Natural Resources there was a terrible irony to the ordeal, given how worried I was about my business away in a blind trust just to prevent such a conflict of interest. Less than one year later, I found out how justifiable those business worries had become.

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On Easter Sunday morning in the spring of 1982, I was summoned by Fred Beairsto and my other business trustees to a meeting at his home. In a few brief words, Fred advised me that JWBCO was in great financial difficulty, and the trustees unanimously recommended that I immediately consider returning to take over management of the company. They would tell me no more, nor provide any details about the state of the business. They merely gave me their recommendation as to the action I should consider, advising however that they would continue to do their best to conduct the affairs of the company in the manner to which they were committed. The message for me was clear and it was ominous.

That meeting on Easter Sunday did not last long. There was little discussion because of the disciplined will of the trustees to ensure that the provisions of the Conflict of Interest Act were fully respected. Yet as I drove back home shortly after noon that day, (while our first grandchild, Lindsay Culton was being delivered in the Fredericton Hospital almost simultaneous to the meeting), my mind and my emotions were in a state of turmoil. In the end, though, it did not take many hours for me to arrive at my decision: to return promptly to JWBCO, and to strive to revive the

business I had founded almost twenty-four years earlier. It was unthinkable that I should allow that business to fail without being at its helm in every final effort to save it. Moreover, if I were not to do so, it would be a betrayal of those elements of purpose and integrity on which I felt my personal and public reputation was based.

I have always believed that my diversions into political life were made possible by the good fortune experienced in my business affairs, and to some extent public service was a way of contributing in kind for the success that had come my way. Because of the public cynicism even in those years about political representatives being in the government process only for their own purpose, it had always been part of my resolve that there would never be a perception I was serving in politics because I needed the job. My financial independence (however modest it may have been at any time), was nevertheless always sufficient to support my life, whether my political career was successful or not.

There really was no doubt about the course of action to be taken, and I immediately contacted Premier Richard Hatfield to advise him that I would have to resign from the cabinet and from the Legislature as quickly as possible. Because there was unfinished business in which I was involved as Minister, and to ensure that I was being perceived to fulfill my responsibilities in a reasonable manner, I determined that I should immediately announce my intention to resign but allow for a brief period for transition before the resignation would be effective. During the next couple of days and evenings, Richard Hatfield and I had some of the best conversations we had ever shared. He did not try to change my mind, but merely wished to ensure that I was thinking it through carefully and perhaps not reacting too quickly to a challenge that I might not be able to accomplish.

He asked, "What if you can't save the business? What then would be the purpose in leaving your political career for an otherwise impossible situation?" Those were good questions, of course, but in my heart of hearts I knew there was no alternative. Even if facing failure, I had to return to my company to try and save it, or otherwise to at least

re-start and re-establish my business career in some other way. With great understanding and even a sense of compassion, characteristics that I had not personally experienced from Richard Hatfield before, he accepted my judgement and agreed that I should proceed with the public announcement the very next day in the Legislature.

It was on April 26, 1982, a little more than two weeks after meeting with my business trustees and Premier Hatfield, that I held a press conference to announce publicly that I was resigning from the government to return to private life and to the management of JWBCO. It made front page news, and was generally well received by both the public and the media. There seemed to be an understanding and even a sense of regret that such a decision had become necessary for me. My prepared statement read in part:

"It is with sincere regret that I wish to advise my constituents in Fredericton South and citizens throughout New Brunswick of my intention to leave public office in order to resolve difficult matters in my private business with which I am unable to deal while sitting as a Member of the Legislature."

"In arriving at this decision, I am responding to a strong recommendation from the trustees who have directed my business affairs under the Conflict of Interest Act. This decision has been reached in consultation with Premier Hatfield, and with sincere respect for the outstanding leadership which he and his government have long provided to New Brunswick. It has been a privilege for me to participate in such an excellent administration, and I am particularly grateful for the opportunity which I have had in serving as Minister of Natural Resources."

"The staff of that department have my highest admiration for the dedicated and capable manner in which they manage the valuable mining, forestry, fish, wildlife and Crown land resources of our province. I am proud to have shared in some of the important accomplishments in resource legislation which are now firmly in place

ı New Brunswick, and to be able to see developing evidence of the ffectiveness of those policies."

While making it clear that my departure would take place as soon ; possible, consistent with an orderly transition of my present ıinisterial responsibilities, I did allude to the possibility of some day :turning to political life: "It is not my intent that this action will be an ıd to my political involvement in the affairs of New Brunswick. To the ɔntrary, I trust that it will prove to be a temporary interruption in my ⁄ailability to help serve my community, my province and my party."

It was hardly a secret that I held long term aspirations to some ay serve as Premier of New Brunswick after Richard Hatfield had :tired, and in media speculation I was generally considered to be one of :veral logical successors. In resigning from public office in 1982, I anted to leave the door open to pursue that goal in later years. Because f the controversy about the Conflict of Interest Act in which I had been ıvolved in 1980 there were naturally questions asked about whether I lt unfairly treated by this legislation, which was still relatively new and erhaps then unique to New Brunswick. In an interview printed in the *lontreal Gazette* on April 28, 1982, I endeavoured to set the record raight in that regard:

"The Conflict of Interest Act is very good legislation. It is strict ıd it makes it difficult for a businessman who does business with the ɔvernment to sit in the Legislature and also participate in his business ffairs. In fact, it makes it impossible, and I think rightly so."

"I encourage people in the business world to be interested and ecome active in political affairs. Too often we sit back and complain ɔout what is being done or not being done, and we don't do anything ɔout it ourselves. Particularly in these economic times, there is a need ɔr the business world to become involved in politics."

Upon my resignation, generous accolades were forthcoming om many directions. The opposition Liberal Leader, Doug Young, ho had actually been on my campaign team for Mayor in 1969 when

he was a student at UNB, was uncharacteristically kind to an enemy from the other side, saying, "the brightest light of the bright lights has been dimmed, so to speak." An old friend, the late Dr. Wilfred Carter of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, praised the salmon-tagging program and said that I would be sorely missed. Most impressive of all was a long editorial in *The Daily Gleaner* on Wednesday, April 28, 1982, which read in part:

"It can be said that Bud Bird was the strong man of his Party. He was virtually its spokesman. He served in an extremely sensitive portfolio, exposed to the slings and arrows of every faction finding fault with the way the province's natural resources are being managed. The flack he took would long ago have discouraged men of lesser stuff. He was the rock on which the waves of dissent pounded and fell back."

"A measure of the man is that, although the forestry legislation which he shepherded through the House met stiff resistance, it passed through that House with no amendments – a most unusual circumstance."

"...good businessmen are having second thoughts about running for public office. Conflict of Interest legislation seriously limits business people from entering political life. The sacrifices it calls upon them to make are immense and sometimes financially disastrous personally."

"To preclude them from public office by compelling them to put their enterprises in jeopardy is just too much. Surely there is a happy medium. The case of Bud Bird demands that such a happy medium be found, and quickly."

Such kind words are certainly very satisfying to hear, and they made me feel that my four years of service as MLA and Minister had been a worthwhile contribution, and that I was leaving office with a genuine measure of respect. That is a good feeling for any individual, especially an elected politician who does not hear such praise very often. There is a touch of irony involved here in the sense that appreciation only seems to come when one is departing in political life; yet it is the cynicism and disrespect that one frequently encounters while running

and serving in elected office that so often discourages good people from getting involved at all.

For the next few weeks after announcing my intent to resign, I remained extremely busy with all of the responsibilities of my office, particularly onerous because the Legislature was fully in session that spring. Finally, on June 9, 1982, following Question Period in the morning, I formally shook hands with the Premier and left the building for good.

One of my friendly political opponents, Liberal Allan Maher from Dalhousie, provoked the following "bouquet" in the *Woodstock Bugle* newspaper: "To former Natural Resources Minister J.W. Bud Bird for a classic exit. Responding to insults from Liberal Allan Maher that he did not know how to resign properly, Bird rose on a point of privilege last Wednesday to announce he was stepping down immediately. Following brief remarks and a farewell handshake with Premier Hatfield, Bird then turned and strode out of the House. Now that's the way to resign!"

Chapter 8

Saving the Business

On the same day that I walked out of the Legislature, I returnec immediately to my office as general manager of JWBCO and began tc survey the damage that had been done while I was away. I also startec thinking about the challenges that had to be met for survival.

By then, I knew what had happened to bring about the crisis a JWBCO. Early in 1979, shortly after my departure from the business tc enter the Legislature, four key men had resigned jointly from JWBCC to form a new competitive company called Arrow Constructior Products Limited. The four men who left were George Peppin marketing manager for construction specialties; Edgar Goguen, branch manager at Halifax; Reg Bavis, branch manager at Moncton; and Brian Culligan, assistant comptroller at Fredericton. When I first heard o these departures, I recall thinking to myself, "My God, George Peppin or others like him could very well have been able to run our company and these losses would likely not have happened." However, the errors

judgement had been made; key employees had never been considered r such responsibilities, so there had been no turning back.

By the very manner in which these resignations were so uniform d well organized, they seemed clearly intended to copy the business odel of JWBCO and to take advantage of the knowledge and perience these employees had gained there over several years; also to ploit the vulnerable transition which was then occurring in its adership and management. Still early in his new role as president, ndy LeBlanc was not able to find the measures that might have kept ese employee losses from occurring, and in fairness probably had no kling that they were about to occur. Once the genie was out of the ttle, even the belated best efforts of Fred Beairsto, Bob Eddy and others uld not put it back. Over a very short time Arrow became established, th good sales right from the start in almost all similar product lines, ile JWBCO was demoralized and on the defensive, losing competitive omentum in the marketplace every single month.

The results were devastating for JWBCO, not just in losses of les and market penetration, but also in employee morale and corporate irit. It was as if the old JWBCO had been taken away by a few former ends and colleagues, leaving the remnants of the business under new anagement, with myself as founder and leader gone entirely from the ene. In reflecting upon turning points in the history of JWBCO, this as probably the most pivotal one of all because it devastated the almost clusive position that the company held in the construction specialties arket in Atlantic Canada. This one single event would have an adverse pact on our company's direction and development for years to come.

My own preparation for the change of careers had been done liberately and with good planning, knowing about the requirements r a blind trust, and having selected a group of five experienced business lleagues and friends to manage my affairs and those of the company trustees. The efforts of Fred Beairsto as chairman could not have been ore diligent, as he devoted large portions of his time with only inimal, if any, compensation and at major sacrifice of attention to his

family and his own business affairs. Despite the significant moves to prepare for a sustainable transition, the shock of losing four of JWBCO's best and most trusted people, and their successful creation of a new competitive company, were damaging developments of immense proportions. It seemed obviously a classic defection, taking full advantage of my own absence and inability to respond, and leaving the new general manager and the trustees in a quandary of uncertainty and inexperience about how to deal with it. Not only was an instant and knowledgeable competitor created, but one that was owned and operated by people employed and trained for years by JWBCO in a specialized sales and marketing business. That they virtually copied the JWBCO model can at least be taken as the highest form of flattery.

The cost over the past thirty years has been immeasurable, because had those events not occurred, I feel JWBCO might well have become a *national* company in the construction specialties sector. The irony is that George Peppin, a knowledgeable and respected individual, would undoubtedly have played a major role for JWBCO in such future development. It is all so clear in hindsight: had I remained diligent and devoted to JWBCO and rejected the call to political service, I believe that the company team would have stayed together. We would have been able to take that unique product mix of construction specialties and allied architectural materials to every province over future years. However, it was by then too late to reflect upon lost opportunities.

By the time I returned, one of the most difficult jobs – terminating the employment of Sandy LeBlanc – had already been done by Fred Beairsto. I know what a painful session that final meeting must have been for Fred, who is a man of great sensitivity and compassion at any time. It was an ordeal he performed on my behalf for which I have always been grateful. We both respected and liked Sandy well, and we shared sincere regret that with the best of intentions we had helped to misdirect his career by persuading him to join JWBCO.

It was necessary to start with as much financial room to move as possible, so I began by seeking time and patience from our banks and

other creditors. This looked like an almost impossible task. Fate and good fortune intervened when I received a call from Harrison McCain, the CEO of McCain Foods Limited, whom I had known in passing for many years. In his usual blunt and aggressive fashion, Harrison said, "Even though we are on opposite sides of the political fence, Bud, we thought you were a damn good Minister and it's a shame you had to leave the government. Just what the hell is wrong with your company, and what do you need to do to fix it?"

I told him we had run out of working capital, that our current liabilities were greatly exceeding our current assets. The banks were unwilling to loan us more, and in fact were thinking of calling in their debts unless we found a way to get new financing into the business immediately. We owed a lot of money to our suppliers, though most of them had been patient with us for many months because of good relationships over several years.

In response, Harrison said "Bud, here is something I think you should do. You should call every one of those suppliers, and remind them of how much business you have given their firms over the history of your company; tell them you need their help now. Ask them to take the debts you owe them and set them aside for at least a year or even longer, so that their deferrals will become working capital on your balance sheet. There is no reason why you should go out of business with the good record your company has always had, and you tell those manufacturers to call me if they want to discuss the matter further."

"Well Harrison," I replied, "I should tell you that we owe one of your companies, Day & Ross Trucking, about $50,000, so they would be one of the first suppliers we might have to approach." To this he responded quickly, "That's a damn good example. We will freeze that account indefinitely, and will give you new credit starting immediately on regular terms, and I will send you a letter today to that effect. You can use that letter to show all of your other suppliers, and I hope it will cause them to do the same."

With that act of business concern, advice and kindness, and with a copy of Harrison's signed letter in my briefcase at all times, I set out to visit every major supplier, essentially asking them to invest capital in our business by withholding the accounts we owed them on a long term basis until we were able to pay them back. As with Harrison's own commitment these deferrals were all without interest. The response was overwhelming. Within about two months, I had arranged deferrals of well over $1 million which were enough to replenish our working capital to the satisfaction of the banks, who also agreed to keep their own loans in place. From that starting point, we concentrated on cutting our expenses wherever possible and on increasing our sales and rebuilding our business. Thanks almost entirely to the initiative that Harrison McCain had taken in calling me and to the advice and assistance he provided, I was able to stop the bleeding, and give the business a fighting chance to come back.

Once JWBCO's financial position had been stabilized with the help of our suppliers, the really big challenge in turning the company towards profitability again was to try and repair some of the serious damage to sales and profit margins caused by the competition from the Arrow group. We certainly had to respect their performance. Not only were they taking away large portions of our sales and market share in existing products, but with the help of George Peppin's special knowledge and experience, gained over his years with us, they were also making great progress in acquiring new specialty product lines.

One of these was a new EPDM rubber roofing membrane being manufactured by the Carlyle Rubber Company in the USA, and it was proving to be an innovative concept in the roofing industry. With the Carlyle line, Arrow was able to establish a very successful profile early in its existence and of course this helped in the rapid building of their business. JWBCO did not even have such a roofing product, and so were shut out of that phase of the market completely, which was further demoralizing.

This began to change when we established contact with the Firestone Rubber Company in early 1983, who were developing their

vn line of EPDM roofing products to compete with Carlyle. We became eir distributor for Atlantic Canada, and so for the first time in its story, JWBCO was seriously in the roofing business on a specialized ısis. Through Neill's Wholesale, we had been selling commodity ofing materials such as asphalt shingles for the residential contractor arket for years, but the Firestone products were architecturally signed for commercial buildings, factories, schools, hospitals and the ce, and required that unique kind of sales and marketing capability on hich JWBCO had been founded. Getting the Firestone line in our arketing package was also instantly a great morale builder, because it oved to our employees and our customers that we were still alive, and ıle to vigorously compete with Arrow and others.

As it has turned out, the roofing sector of the construction dustry began to develop many new and innovative products to solve ıe age-old problem of keeping buildings watertight, and roofing has ow become one of JWBCO's most successful areas of business. ıppliers and products have changed from time to time, but getting into ıe roofing business with Firestone did prove to be a major turning point ıck in the dark days after my return from politics. In later years, current esident Geoff Munn played a strong role in expanding JWBCO's ofing products business, and the company has become a leader in this ctor of the construction industry. It is satisfying to consider the loyalty ıd dedication of so many employees who stayed with the company ıroughout that adversity, especially those such as Geoff and his lleagues, who eventually helped to lead JWBCO back to long term owth and profitability.

In reflecting upon my years of absence from the business while rving as MLA and Minister of Natural Resources, it has been interesting review the financial statements for JWBCO from that time and earlier. he company had certainly fallen a long way from the glory year of 1975 hen sales were $32 million and we seemed to have the business world at ur feet and the future in our hands. It was now the end of 1982 and JWBCO as a barely breathing company, with sales at less than $14 million.

Although business started to increase after my return, profit margins remained at low levels and by the end of 1984 the retained earnings of JWBCO (which had been more than $1.5 million a decade earlier) were depleted to less than zero. What a tremendous deterioration of financial value. We had worked seventeen years to create that value, and then allowed ourselves to lose it all. It makes me want to weep looking back on that tragedy, although I am well aware that it all comes from self-inflicted wounds for which I accept full blame and responsibility. By 1988, which was to be my last full year in managing the operations of JWBCO, sales were slightly over $25 million and we had returned to profitability. The net value of the company at the end of that year had been restored to only about one-third of its previous all-time high thirteen years before.

The intervention by Harrison McCain at that time of great crisis in my business life after leaving the Legislature is one of the wonderful business stories I shall treasure. It was a political story too, because Harrison's offer to help me was an expression of his appreciation for the role he felt that I had played in public service for the province. He was also able to identify with the risks that people take in changing their lives to offer for public office, but I think he especially respected the manner in which I was prepared to voluntarily give up a Minister's job and return to private life to fulfill my personal responsibilities. I detected much the same attitude from almost all of my constituents and business colleagues. Many of my political friends, however, could hardly believe that there was any reason sufficient to justify leaving such a choice position.

In all of that, I believe, lies the essence of cynicism and disrespect for politicians that has become so severe in recent decades. The public seem to believe – aided by the spin placed on political affairs by the media – that being in elected office is the most desirable thing that any person could possibly have happen to their career. They perceive that politicians thirst for the power and prestige that go with such elected positions. Thus, when election campaigns are being run and the very best of candidates are seeking support at the ballot box, there is often a

psychological disconnect. Even some of the most reasonable voters seem to adopt the attitude that they are bestowing a gift or a favour with their vote, rather than conveying support for a good person who has offered to take on an important responsibility.

It has therefore been refreshing in more recent years when someone like Premier Frank McKenna, who performed well and brought good government to New Brunswick, voluntarily stepped down when he was at the peak of his popularity. That is the moment when people seem to come to their senses, and realize what a loss that elected representative is going to be. It doesn't happen very often, but if there is one profession where it is very good and satisfying to quit while you are ahead, it is in politics. In my case, the reasons for quitting were forced upon me by failures from my business career, but the political result appeared to be the same. I seemed to gain more respect from quitting than I had felt from being elected.

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As I worked to revive the fortunes of JWBCO during the middle 1980's, I became a business partner with my oldest son Stephen. He lived in Toronto where he had graduated from York University a few years earlier with a degree in fine arts. He was a friendly and engaging young man with a high degree of energy and intelligence, and one of the best loved members of our family. Stephen was also homosexual and a gay activist, a fact I had great difficulty in understanding or accepting for many years. It was a subject that we did not discuss at all between us, and while I often saw him during visits to Toronto where he lived and worked, there was always this void in the communication screen between us, and so we were never really very close. Our dialogue was mainly about business and family affairs, and I deliberately avoided any contact with his friends or the people around him. Even though the times of great sadness that followed have given me a new sense about Stephen and his life, I still find it difficult to fully embrace the reality of homosexuality, even though I do strive to do so.

After his graduation from York University, Stephen had som experience in the fashion industry, both as a model and in marketin During 1983, he encountered an opportunity to purchase a small chain c five stores called B.J. Larkin Ltd. in Toronto. The chain included a store in th Eaton Centre, another one at Yorkville, and three more at reasonably goo locations around the city. Fuelled by Stephen's enthusiasm, and my desire t find some way to strengthen the bonds between us, it was eventually decide that Bird Holdings Ltd. would help to finance the acquisition.

My close friend and business advisor in those days, Fred Beairst was brought into the discussions. Although I recall he was highl skeptical, Fred did recognize the family dynamics that were at work, s agreed to do his best to serve as a consultant to the enterprise. One of h very first recommendations proved fateful. Because this new busine was entirely dependent upon Stephen to manage it, Fred proposed th BHL place substantial insurance on his life. It would clearly have been serious financial setback for BHL if the B.J Larkin business were to fa for loss of its owner and manager.

Not many months later, in early 1985, to our shock and sadne Stephen was diagnosed with AIDS. After a very painful and traumat year for him, as well as for his family and friends, Stephen passed awa in February of 1986. One of the most bittersweet memories of my life of sitting with Stephen about two months before his death, helping hi write his will. In his typically brave and generous spirit, he discussed h final wishes and asked that the value of his BHL shares be used to hel his family and close friends. The primary portion was designated as contribution to the care of his mother, from whom I had been divorce many years; smaller portions were for Peggy, whom he loved almost his own, his brothers and sisters and several very close friends. H appointed me executor, and each year there is a reminder of his love an respect when we are able to pay an annual dividend to those beneficiari from the redemption of his BHL shares.

Even before Stephen became ill, B.J. Larkin Ltd. was having difficult time, and we had been working together to find a satisfacto

new direction, or preferably an exit from the business, right up to the time of his death. While the stores had not proved very profitable, there did appear to be significant value in the leases for certain locations such as the Eaton Centre. As a result, some interesting opportunities existed, one about which Stephen was very excited.

He had come to know two successful clothing entrepreneurs in Toronto, Joseph and Saul Mimran, who owned the Alfred Sung brand of clothing and accessories. They were in the process of test marketing a new chain of stores to be called Club Monaco, and had proposed that Stephen's Eaton Centre location be used as the pilot model. In return for his investment, B.J. Larkin Ltd. would have first rights to all Club Monaco stores in the metropolitan Toronto area.

By then, so discouraged with the business prospects of B.J. Larkin Ltd., and depressed about the serious consequences of Stephen's illness, I was unwilling to consider any new opportunities, as positive as they might be. Therefore, despite Stephen's great enthusiasm, I declined to take the risks of time and money that the Club Monaco experiment would entail. We needed the Eaton Centre location in order to help find an eventual buyer for the whole B.J. Larkin chain. Ultimately we were able to do so, and the business was sold with moderate financial losses. During the same time, Club Monaco opened its first store on Queen Street West, a location which still exists today, and the chain has become an upscale clothing retailer with eighty stores worldwide, of which twenty-eight are in Canada. In 1999, Club Monaco was sold to Polo Ralph Lauren, and is a multi-million dollar success story. Stephen's confidence was more than justified, but I had turned the opportunity down. It is with a mixed sense of sadness, frustration and poor judgement that I reflect upon our business efforts together, with the knowledge that Stephen was right about the possibilities, and I was wrong.

A positive sequel to the sad story of Stephen's death was realization of the prescient wisdom of Fred Beairsto when he insisted that BHL invest in a large life insurance policy on Stephen at the time of purchasing the Larkin stores. Not only did those funds help to cushion the operating

losses of B.J. Larkin Ltd. while we were waiting to sell the stores, but the proceeds also greatly strengthened the value of Bird Holdings Ltd., and in fact contributed to its survival over difficult times that followed. Thus, in the relative prosperity that BHL enjoys to the current day, there is a vested interest that has been passed on in no uncertain terms from the life and death of Stephen Bird, and from the wise judgement and advice which Fred Beairsto gave to this company on that and other occasions.

In looking back upon my relationship with Stephen, there is the sad irony that his dreaded illness, and the grim reality of his almost certain demise, brought us together in a sense of soul and spirit that all the healthier and happier times of his life could not generate between us. As his father, my inflexible views of right and wrong, my parental attitude of moral certainty and pride, did not make room to really get to know him well, and in fact I gave up trying to understand his own ways, aptitudes and aspirations. It was only in his final illness and the prelude to his death that I got to see the real depth of his humanity, his love of life and his courage to face it, and also his genuine affection and respect for me, as for all others in our family. It was an experience that has caused me to realize anew what I have long known and so often ignored: that every person is unique and has his/her own path, story and view of the world. What is common, however, is the capacity within us for mutual respect and affection, even when our ways are not compatible. That was the lesson that I finally learned from Stephen, sadly only at the end of his life.

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One of the most interesting and satisfying aspects of political life at any level is the opportunity to meet people and organizations from across the country with whom one might not ordinarily ever come in contact. Occasionally, good relationships remain after the term in office has ended, and sometimes these lead to new opportunities. This happened in my case when Adam Zimmerman of Noranda Inc. invited me in 1983 to join their board of directors, which was a compliment far beyond my fondest business dreams. At that time, Noranda was one of the world's premier natural resource companies. Its board then consisted

of sixteen directors, many of whom were at the very top of their respective business professions in Canada or the USA. To be regarded by people like Zimmerman and Noranda chairman, Alf Powis, as capable of making a director's contribution to their organization was indeed a very flattering and exciting prospect. It was an experience that I have deeply appreciated ever since the invitation came my way, and was an inspiring opportunity for me to gain knowledge and experience at the highest levels of Canadian business. It also proved the beginning of a modest but lasting relationship I have enjoyed with Noranda, and its successors Brascan and Brookfield, for more than twenty-five years.

I was first invited to serve as a director of a public company when the late John Fisher, then president and CEO of Fraser Papers in Edmundston, asked me to join his board in early 1983, just a few months before Adam Zimmerman's Noranda invitation came along. The Fraser company was a subsidiary of Noranda at that time, and it was a special privilege for me to become directly associated with such a well-known and respected New Brunswick industrial icon. It was the firm where my best friend in life, Charlie Connely, had spent his entire career. In fact, his father John Connely, Sr., had been the woodlands manager of Frasers in the early years of the 20th century. Throughout our personal relationship and our common love for hunting and fishing, Charlie had painted many wonderful pictures in my mind of large Atlantic salmon runs in the Kedgwick River, and of huge deer populations throughout the Fraser timber limits. For me, Frasers was almost a hallowed institution, representing all the tremendous values of New Brunswick's natural resources. So when asked to become a member of its board, the feeling was like being elevated to business heaven.

During the mid-1980's, Frasers was doing quite well. In the person of John Fisher, the company was being led by a fine and capable man, who became a friend. Regrettably, he passed away prematurely from cancer after moving back to Toronto a few years later. Over the ensuing two decades, there have been many changes made in the Fraser organization, as its fortunes have declined in step with the whole forest

industry in North America. My involvement has continued in variou ways, (except for the interruption while a Member of Parliament i Ottawa), and it has been sad and frustrating for me and others to see thi historic New Brunswick business grow smaller and weaker over recen years, despite best efforts by Brookfield to sustain it as a viable operation

Shortly after I had joined the Noranda Board, when that compan was primarily known for mining and metals, Adam Zimmerman was give the mandate to create a new forest products division called Noranda Forest and I was privileged to become one of its founding directors. Anothe former acquaintance who had attended and played hockey at UNB when was still a boy in Fredericton, Tim Kenny, was appointed president. It wa not long until Noranda Forest became a major and profitable organizatio on the Canadian forestry scene. Eventually, while I was still a director o both companies, Noranda Forest acquired full ownership of Frasers, an ultimately adopted a new corporate name, Nexfor Inc.

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I have also been pleased to be able to serve as a director of othe public companies along the way. In late 1982 I was approached by Harr Steele, the owner of Eastern Provincial Airways, to go on his board jus after the company had endured a difficult pilot's strike. He said he wante someone from New Brunswick who could bring both business an political experience. I was happy to join his organization. Unfortunatel it did not last long, because EPA was soon purchased by Canadian Pacific and the role of EPA's board evaporated. It was fun for a while; Harry Steel is an interesting and generous individual, with a high level of dynami energy, and he treated me well. That relationship faded over the years but I still admire the success he has achieved with his investments in Newfoundland Capital, which remains a public company.

During my brief time on the EPA board, I especially enjoyed the privilege of having a free pass to fly within their network in Atlantic Canada, and also had one memorable helicopter fishing trip in Labrado with Harry Steele and the late Craig Dobbin. I was in Harry's party, and

/henever we landed at a river to start fishing it would only be a few ıinutes before he was ready to take off again. If the fish did not strike his y almost instantly, he wanted to set out for a new river. Patience is not ne of Harry's strong suits, at least not in fishing, but his urge to move on as certainly served him well in his business career. His late friend, Craig)obbin, was very much cast from the same mould, and those two lewfoundlanders have demonstrated outstanding entrepreneurial skills nd achievements during their careers.

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Another very interesting involvement with a public company merged in 1983, from a contact made more than twenty years earlier, /hen Iain Ronald called me in his capacity as the President of Zellers nc. and asked if I would be willing to serve as a director of that national ompany. He had remembered me from his younger days as a manager nd accountant with an aluminum fabrication company in Toronto, then epresented by JWBCO. He had followed my career, and when Zellers /as looking for a director from the Atlantic area he thought of me. That /as a lucky stroke, and was followed by a coincidental relationship a ouple of years later when a fellow Noranda director, Don McGivern, hen the CEO and governor of the Hudson Bay Company, also invited ne to serve on its board. Since the Bay was the owner of Zellers, I found nyself with a related role in each company, which remained until Zellers ventually became privatized within the Bay corporate structure.

This exposure to the retail business at a national level was new for ne, and I enjoyed the experience. It was especially interesting to get to neet the late Ken Thompson who was chairman of the Bay, and also the ichest man in Canada. He was an outstanding gentleman of great ourtesy and genuine personal respect for others. Unfortunately, when decided to enter federal politics, I was required to resign as a director of the Bay, and regrettably that opportunity did not return. My xperience with the Bay and Zellers as retail organizations was helpful to ny understanding of the B.J. Larkin business, in which my son Stephen ıad by then become involved. Had he not taken ill and passed away, and

if I had stayed in business and maintained those Bay relationships instead of going back into politics at the federal level, it is possible that the B.J. Larkin story might have turned out differently and successfully.

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Serving as a director on those several public boards during my career has provided a unique experience, which clearly was a result of good fortune coming my way. Had I not met people like Adam Zimmerman through public office, the opportunities might simply have passed me by. Yet, I have been rewarded with the essence of a business experience almost as good as having a business degree. The people with whom I have been involved were generally very successful in their own careers, and highly experienced in their business backgrounds. The subject matter was almost always of a regional or national nature, frequently international in the case of Noranda, so it provided me with an exposure and a perspective far larger and more stimulating in a business sense than I might otherwise have ever had.

I did find that I was able to keep up with most agendas, except in highly specialized areas such as mining technology, where expert help was provided. For the most part, my own background in small business and my political experience seemed to have prepared me well because most issues and decisions even on those major boards involve a good deal of common sense and practical judgement. My participation within these various companies at a director level was very rewarding, both in terms of personal interest and enjoyment and also in the generous fees they paid, which have now grown significantly over recent years. At the beginning of those times in the mid-80's, after returning from provincial politics to salvage the remains of JWBCO, those new dimensions to my business life helped to cushion and sustain my morale, and provided inspiration and impetus to my efforts on the home front as JWBCO began to turn towards profitability again.

Chapter 9

On Parliament Hill

During the mid-1980's, while I worked to revive the fortunes o JWBCO and enjoyed new experiences on the variety of corporat boards, my interest in provincial politics had not waned. To th contrary, I still clearly had it in my mind that one day I would becom Premier of New Brunswick. This was an aspiration shared an encouraged by my friend, Fred Beairsto, with whom I remaine regularly associated on a business basis, (he and the other trustees ha agreed to continue serving as JWBCO directors even after my return i 1982). We both were very active in terms of political meetings during a of that time. I was serving as a national director for New Brunswick o the board of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, a positio that Fred himself held at a later date.

In the fall of 1982, a few months after I had left office, Premi Hatfield called a general election, where the PC Party increased i majority to thirty-nine seats in the fifty-eight-seat Legislature. Th

victory seemed to initiate the beginning of the end to Hatfield's political career however, because over succeeding months and years he seemed to lose his interest and energy for governing, and the government itself appeared to become ever more leaderless. The Premier's preoccupations and personal behaviour grew increasingly strange, and the lethargy came to a shocking head September 25, 1984, on the occasion of the Queen's tour of New Brunswick, when marijuana was discovered in Hatfield's suitcase during a lost-luggage incident, and the subsequent inspection of his travel bag. This controversy raged on for many months, with him proclaiming innocence and accusing enemies of planting the marijuana, but his popularity and support continued to decline. Three MLAs in the Hatfield government resigned to sit as independents in protest, and others threatened to do so. There were many demands for his resignation, both in the media and on the street, but he doggedly refused to even discuss or entertain such a possibility.

Instead, he pointed himself towards the 1985 Annual General Meeting of the PC Party of New Brunswick, at which a confidence vote on his leadership would be held. Naturally, the planning for this meeting involved great drama and intrigue, and the gathering itself became one of the most important political events in New Brunswick history. In the final analysis as Hatfield had accurately contemplated, party unity did prevail and there was majority support for his continued leadership. Strangely, however, the final results of the tally were never announced or revealed. Those numbers remain a secret to this very day, supposedly concealed in the memory of Janice Clarke, the PC Party president at the time who chaired the meeting and destroyed the ballots.

Both Fred Beairsto and myself, along with many others, were deeply concerned about the declining state of the PC government and party, especially looking ahead to the next provincial election, which would be in 1987 at the latest. It seemed clear that if Richard Hatfield continued to be our leader, that next election would be a disaster for the Tories, and most certainly there would be a new Liberal government. Many options were discussed and many initiatives taken to convince the

Premier that he should announce his retirement and convene a new leadership convention, but all to no avail. I wrote a personal and respectful letter to him myself on December 14, 1986, and that letter was delivered to his executive assistant, Ross McKean, an individual with whom I have always had a good relationship and trust. Obviously his first loyalty was to the Premier, so I have harboured some doubts as to whether that letter was ever delivered, given the many similar representations being made at the time. My letter and all the others turned out to be wasted efforts, as I anticipated would be the case, because Richard Hatfield was stubbornly resolute that only the people of New Brunswick would bring about his resignation as Premier, and they would have to do so at the ballot box.

As is now a matter of dramatic political history in New Brunswick, Hatfield's demise did occur exactly in that way two years later in October of 1987, when the Liberal Party under new Premier Designate Frank McKenna swept every single seat in the Provincial Legislature and the PC Party of New Brunswick was destroyed fifty-eight to zero. With those results, but perhaps even two years earlier when Hatfield had survived that famous annual meeting, my own dream and those of others aspiring to become Premier of New Brunswick ended. It must be said that Richard Hatfield had a very successful and historic career in his seventeen years as New Brunswick's Premier. His vision and skill in bringing linguistic and cultural harmony to the province will especially be a lasting legacy. In the end, as was his wish, it was the people of New Brunswick who brought his tenure to its end.

The subsequent career of new Premier Frank McKenna has become a widely acclaimed success story, one that is well deserved. Through his own positive and enthusiastic attitude, and driven by the success of economic initiatives such as the development of an innovative call centre industry, he lifted the people of New Brunswick to a new sense of pride and constructive spirit, and raised the competitive profile of the province among other jurisdictions, both within Canada and internationally. He learned to speak French while in office, thus

demonstrating in his own practical way that bilingualism has a real and powerful potential as a New Brunswick advantage, and strengthening the unity of the province in doing so. (While he did not like me saying so, I once chided Frank that his approach and policies made him one of the best Conservative Premiers New Brunswick ever had, even though in Liberal clothing.) In my view there were only a couple of significant lapses in McKenna's time as Premier of New Brunswick. In addition to his initial opposition to the Meech Lake Accord, which was an unfortunate position he did his utmost to later redeem, there was one other strange political action in his otherwise impressive performance.

It was the manner of implementing a very positive policy decision, *highway tolls*, as a way of accelerating construction of the new four-lane Trans-Canada Highway through the province. This user-pay approach to highway infrastructure development is one that I have long supported, so McKenna's policy was easy for me to applaud as a strong fundamental for the future of New Brunswick. Regrettably, for reasons I cannot fathom, the McKenna team implemented its toll policy with inequitable contradictions. They did not impose the tolls in a universal manner wherever the four-lane highway existed in the province; rather, the tolls were made applicable only to the new stretch between Fredericton and Moncton. The result was a perceived unfairness between adjacent communities; for example Salisbury where tolls were applicable and Sackville where they were not. In the next election campaign Bernard Lord was able to make "the inequity of toll roads" a major issue. Surprisingly, this helped Lord to become Premier in 1999. Having thus been elected to eliminate tolls as a policy, the new Premier proceeded to do so and, in my opinion, has inherently set back New Brunswick transportation development in a lasting manner. It will be very difficult for any government to reintroduce tolls for highway construction in New Brunswick for many years to come. So a very positive policy initiative by the McKenna government was lost through an odd approach to its implementation.

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It is late in 2009, the holiday period between Christmas and New Year's to be exact, when I encounter an opportunity to briefly read Toronto Life, the magazine that reports from the fast lane in our country's most vibrant power centre. At the top left corner of the front cover there is a headline for an inner story, "Frank McKenna, the city's most influential man". On page fifty-six, I go on to read an excellent story that makes one very proud to have known and worked with Frank, in my own case only a little bit and on a couple of occasions, and it truly is an inspiration to note the constructive and very positive impact he is making on the broad Canadian scene. What is especially impressive is that he has continued to be himself, the same personality that helped raise our own sights in New Brunswick for ten years, and is now extending his reach across the country as deputy chair of TD Bank and as "the most connected man in the country." It is a delicious irony that this outstanding individual has on two separate occasions turned down opportunities to become the Prime Minister of Canada, simply because he can get more done outside the political box than in it. His case is one good example of why we Canadians and our media should pause to reflect upon the criticism, cynicism and innuendo which are so intensely applied to the practice and the profession of politics in our country.

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Early in 1988, when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was preparing to call a federal election for later in the year on the issue of free trade, I was asked by PC Party organizers to serve as campaign chairman for New Brunswick. I worked enthusiastically and diligently with the provincial campaign team during the summer of 1988 as we prepared for a fall election. One of my tasks was to contact the sitting MPs in each riding, to hopefully confirm their intentions to run again, and also to help seek candidates for those ridings where Progressive Conservatives had not previously been elected.

In my home riding of Fredericton-York-Sunbury, Bob Howie had been the Member of Parliament for fifteen years, and there was every indication that he would be running again. So it was a shocker when he called about three months before the intended election date to advise that he had decided to retire. One of the most important ridings in the province, which had been held by the Progressive Conservatives for almost twenty-five years through Bob Howie and Chester McCrea, was now at risk. With the free trade issue making the election campaign a very volatile and uncertain one, I felt a special sense of responsibility as the New Brunswick chairman for the campaign to make sure we held that seat in Fredericton-York-Sunbury.

Things were going quite well at that point in my own life. The WBCO business was producing reasonable results, although it had not fully recovered its original momentum from the mid-70's. In the time since I had resigned as Minister of Natural Resources for New Brunswick in June of 1982, my reputation in the community seemed to have grown favourably and I felt confident at being near the peak of my career. My own business activities were augmented and enhanced by appointments to the boards of some prestigious public companies and, as well, I was being recruited quite actively to become president of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, a job which I later decided to decline although I remain a director of that international conservation organization to this day.

The last thing that I had in my mind was running for election as Member of Parliament, especially remembering Richard Hatfield's words to me that; "Ottawa and federal politics is a jungle that no sane person can figure out or understand, and is merely a place for people to lose their identities if not also their souls."

As soon as Bob Howie's retirement was announced, there were three candidates for what everybody considered a safe PC seat in Fredericton-York-Sunbury: David Wiezel, a director of labour relations at the University of New Brunswick and a man who had been one of my strongest campaign workers for many years; Don Gardiner, a successful

real estate entrepreneur; and Danny Cameron, a hard driving and successful businessman with Atlantic Rentals Limited, and a respected air force veteran of World War II, who loved to speak his mind and had been the man most responsible for keeping New Maryland out of the Greater Fredericton amalgamation in 1973. All three of these candidates were very enthused, and had quickly initiated their own campaigns complete with offices and volunteer teams.

The political climate for the Mulroney government seemed very uncertain, and the election promised to be a serious and important contest. The single largest issue was the proposal to implement the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, and I strongly agreed that this was one of the most important new economic policies for Canada in its history. It was the kind of a cause worth fighting for, but there was a very vigorous and concentrated opposition against it, not just by the Liberals under John Turner, but also among the NDP and other left wing political groups. The importance of winning every possible constituency took on increased significance, and with the right-wing split created by the upstart Confederation of Regions Party within New Brunswick there was a larger than usual risk of losing a traditional Tory seat, even a safe one such as Fredericton-York-Sunbury. These factors began to weigh on my mind, and a great many local Tories began to express concerns that we did not yet have the right candidate. I was encouraged by some to consider running myself.

All three of the people who had declared themselves were capable and credible candidates, but I had a sense of misgiving and was not at all confident that any one of them could be sure of winning against Fredericton Mayor Brad Woodside, the nominated candidate from the Liberal side. Consequently, I began to think more seriously about throwing my own hat in the ring. This was a completely impulsive and ill-considered notion, but I seduced myself into a state of conviction about three things: that free trade was an important national cause; that the PC government badly needed to win the Fredericton-York-Sunbury riding; and that I was the only prospective candidate who could win it for sure.

On the spur of the moment one day I called Fred Beairsto to ask if he would manage my campaign, and before stopping to think about all of the other consequences that this decision would have on my life, both business and otherwise, I publicly announced that I was seeking the nomination. This was followed by a vigorous campaign, with both Danny Cameron and Don Gardiner waging strong efforts, each determined to become the candidate. My friend and strong supporter of earlier days, David Wiezel, decided voluntarily to withdraw once he knew that I was running. This was unexpected, and I felt badly that I could be seen to have pre-empted David's aspirations. Both Don Gardiner and Danny Cameron wondered aloud why it had taken me so long, and why I had come so late. Clearly, they both were upset, with later political events proving that Danny Cameron would never really forgive what he considered to be almost a personal affront.

When the nomination meeting was held at the Fredericton Inn in the early fall of 1988, I was able to win the contest on the first ballot. With Fred Beairsto as my enthusiastic campaign manager on the political scene, and also management consultant to JWBCO on the business side, we prepared ourselves for the November 21st election. I was eventually able to defeat Mayor Woodside by about fifteen hundred votes, a margin far closer than I had expected would be the case. In retrospect, I had been overconfident and perhaps did not campaign with the same intensity that would normally have been my approach. In any case we did win, but I still remember Fred Beairsto's reluctance to even celebrate that evening because he felt we had done more poorly than anticipated. He was especially interested in the comparisons of poll estimates to actual results and had tried to warn me they would be close. For my part, I think polls distort the substance of election campaigns and tend to be self-fulfilling.

With election as a Member of Parliament, I was launched into full-time activity as a federal representative, a role that lasted for the next five years. I immediately resigned from my several positions as a director of both public and private companies. This was a painful requirement, as most of those opportunities would not return. Unfortunately, that

public-spirited but impulsive decision to seek federal election turned out to become what I generally consider "the five lost years" of my life. Not that serving as a Member of Parliament is anything but a very honourable career commitment in my view, and not that I was unable to make many small and important contributions both for the benefit of my constituents and for the government; but by comparison to what I could have achieved in my business roles or even considering the public contributions I could have made as a private citizen, my years as a backbencher in Ottawa were more or less a poor use of the limited and valuable time remaining in my life; I was then fifty-six.

While in my heart of hearts I was tempted to think that Mulroney might find me a role in his cabinet – which I certainly felt confident I could fill competently and successfully – I knew also there were two incumbent ministers ahead of me from New Brunswick and there was no justification for replacing them or adding a third one from such a small province. In reality, I had accepted in advance that my term in Ottawa would be as a backbencher, so I went there prepared to make the best of the situation. In that regard, I do not think I did too badly.

Even for a new Member of Parliament with some previous experience in municipal and provincial governments, the Ottawa scene is large, imposing and complex. There are so many people going in so many different directions that it can take days or even weeks to get one's bearings. In the first month or so, the best points of direction came from our Whip's office (Jim Hawkes from Calgary), or from the Chairman of our Caucus (the late Bob Layton of Montreal, the father of the current Leader of the NDP). Both of these men did their job well for the Mulroney government, and I recognized quickly that they had some real influence with the Prime Minister's Office, so I concentrated on getting to know both Jim and Bob quite well.

The most powerful force in any government for the average MP is the Whip, who takes his orders directly from the Prime Minister. The office reminds me of the Regimental Sergeant Major in a military setting, the link between the Commanding Officer and the men in the ranks.

While the cabinet ministers stand at an elite threshold above the Whip's office, he has significant influence over them in many situations such as attendance at Parliament, and the Whip is capable of getting the Prime Minister's attention even over a cabinet minister if he has reason to do so. Jim Hawkes was a very strong player in our government for all of the five years I spent in Ottawa, and I recognized early on that the best way to get the assignments I wanted was to persuade Jim that I was the right man for the job. I visited with him often, to the point I feel sure he became awfully tired of hearing from me. It paid off, however, because over those years I got to serve on some of the important standing committees in which I was interested, such as Forestry and Fisheries, Environment, Meech Lake, and so on.

To my surprise as well, about mid-term in 1991, Jim advised me that I was being appointed chairman of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, which were brand new policy areas for me involving significant issues and institutions such as public broadcasting (the CBC), telecommunications (the CRTC), fine arts (the Canada Council), and a number of related groups and organizations. This last committee assignment, not ordinarily on my own list of choices, turned out to be one of the most interesting and challenging areas of responsibility during all of my time in Ottawa.

I felt quite flattered because Hawkes, while a bit gruff and garrulous on the surface, was really quite a discerning and discriminating individual who held a senior professorship at the University of Calgary. He obviously seemed to feel that this was a job that could test my abilities, and one that I would enjoy doing. He turned out to be right on both counts, and I appreciated the consideration and attention he gave to me during those years.

Of course, every Member of Parliament wants to be in the cabinet; that is where the serious action takes place. All the other MPs are more or less a supporting cast, going through their daily routines at best efforts to serve their own constituents, while making contributions on the broader federal scene where they can. As difficult

as it may seem, it is not an impossible task. A good backbencher has to work hard at staying abreast of all the issues, whereas a cabinet minister can concentrate mainly on the ones for which he is responsible. When the time is right, such as in weekly Wednesday morning caucus meetings, and when there is something important to say on any given issue, every backbencher has the chance to speak his or her mind, although not many usually do. The process is a little intimidating, because caucus attendance can be as high as two hundred people, with the Prime Minister in the chair and all the cabinet ministers present. But if the ordinary MP takes the responsibility seriously, there is a real opportunity to state one's case. Frequently such representations have very little impact, but again that depends upon the strength and resolve of the MP who is voicing the issue and, also of course, on the substance and the relevance of the point of view. Occasionally, because caucus members bring the collective views of all their constituencies into a single focus in those weekly meetings, the leadership of one MP speaking out on a contentious issue will galvanize and move the opinions of others. There are many precedents where the views of backbenchers have sharply changed the direction in which government was intending to go.

It is often asked, "When does a Member of Parliament stand up for his own beliefs and convictions? Why does he always seem committed to caucus solidarity?" These are simple, yet complex questions that go to the heart of our party system of democracy. The short answers are that MPs vigorously assert and defend their own positions within caucus and its various committee structures, and that is where they strive to make all the progress they can for their own constituency goals. Once the internal debates and strong arguments within caucus are finished however, and a consensus on government or party policy is established, the system requires that all members of caucus adopt loyalty and support for the position that has been reached. It is a process that requires give and take, frequently demanding individual compromise on smaller or extraneous issues in favour of support for the larger goals.

It is necessary to see the party and the caucus as the vehicles of the political process, with the Parliament or the Legislature as the public forums where government policy becomes law. The roles of individual MPs and MLAs are important, but they are expressed internally within the confines of caucus privacy, and externally through public statements of support for caucus or party policies. The individuals are builders of policy within caucus, and communicators of such policy to the public outside of caucus. Every individual, of course, must be true to his own conscience and convictions, but the party system does not work nor would our democracy work effectively if made up of a hodgepodge of independent opinions and positions without any consolidation into cohesive policy, regulation and law.

There are other ways besides caucus meetings for MPs to make themselves count. One, of course, is within the House of Commons where, with diligent effort, every MP can develop opportunities to make statements, deliver speeches and even ask questions during the daily Question Period. Again, this can be an intimidating process, because the whole country is watching you on television and, as the saying goes, "here is the chance to destroy your political career in about thirty seconds." So it is important that you have something meaningful to say, and that you have prepared yourself to say it well. This takes study, time and hard work.

Thus, it takes great understanding, patience, responsibility, courage and especially good judgement for any elected partisan politician to practice his profession effectively and successfully. It is necessary to prioritize short term objectives versus long term goals; to be willing to make progress part way, or as far as possible; to wait for a better opportunity after prior issues have been resolved; to keep working with your colleagues to build support for your position over time; and sometimes to simply abstain or keep your silence when the decision being taken is hard for you to accept.

Occasionally, but rarely, there may become an issue where an individual politician cannot remain silent, when he feels fundamental

principles are at stake. In those cases, one must simply take a stand and damn the consequences. That is always a dramatic occasion, because one will likely risk being evicted from caucus and from the party, which in effect destroys the partisan platform on which one has been elected. In allowing that to happen, politicians must recognize that they are not only burning personal bridges, but also terminating the normal course of political representation for their constituency and constituents. After all, in our partisan system every elected representative is nominated by a party, and when a successful candidate is elected by a majority of constituents, it is not only the person but also the party that has in essence been elected.

So, for mature and responsible politicians, there are very few cases where an individual will take an independent stand and risk eviction from caucus. More frequently, MPs or MLAs will cross the floor and join the opposition party, where they feel their goals might be better served. At least in so doing, they are preserving for their constituents a vehicle to participate in the political process, whereas as independents they become political orphans. As heroic and highly principled as an independent might be seen to be at first glance, in the fullness of time in Parliament or the Legislature the independent will be revealed to have absolutely no effectiveness or power at all, save for some occasional self-serving headlines.

In almost any case, a political representative is best advised to fight like a warrior within his caucus, to do his best to use that vehicle to serve his constituents, and to make the compromises and concessions that are necessary when he has done as much as can be done at the time. That is why politics is called "the art of the possible." It is to know how far your case can be advanced, to advance it that far if you can, and to accept the consequences, at least for the moment, beyond that point.

Although the foregoing comments pertain to partisan politics, (i.e. the party system, Conservative, Liberal or NDP), it also pertains to some extent to municipal politics as well, where the party system is not in play. Even though on City Council there is ample opportunity for individual positions, in the end if one really wishes to get things done

there is a need to find consensus within a strong majority of council colleagues. In actual practice, that requires very much the same process of compromise and concession as is required in a partisan caucus system. Important goals and the best of ideas require a foundation of support to effectively move them forward. Perhaps to a lesser degree, but basically similar to partisan politics, governing a municipality requires the same consensus-building skills and sacrifices, and is seldom a one-man process.

In my own political experience as an elected representative, there was only one occasion when I was sorely tempted to stand against my party, my caucus and my colleagues. That was during my first month as a Member of Parliament when, with the Meech Lake Accord debates a priority issue, the government of Quebec invoked the "notwithstanding clause" to override the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and Premier Bourassa then introduced Bill 178 in the Quebec National Assembly. This decreed that only French could be used on exterior signs, while English would be restricted to signs inside commercial establishments.

It struck me deeply and offensively that Premier Bourassa and his government would be so blatantly insensitive to all of the efforts of his allies in the federal Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa, who were endeavouring at great political risk to establish Quebec as a "distinct society within Canada" through the Meech Lake Accord. In the heat of that moment, I felt that Bill 178 banning the use of the English language on exterior signs in Quebec was like driving a knife into the heart of the Meech Lake Accord. I was strongly moved to stand in Parliament and criticize Bourassa and Quebec for taking such an insensitive action at such an important time. That I did not do so troubled my political conscience because I allowed myself to be overwhelmed by pressures from within our caucus, coupled with a sense of uncertainty from my inexperience at the federal level. Looking back, I should have stood in Parliament to state my critical views on that particular occasion.

Possibly such a stand would have been beneficial to my short term political profile, (which is not what I was considering), but it would likely have ostracized me from the PC caucus. In the long run of history it

would likely not have made a difference because the Meech Lake Accord was defeated in any event. Yet there is no question in my mind that Bill 178 helped to cause that failure, because it eroded the fragile support outside Quebec that the Mulroney government was endeavouring to build for a distinct society in Quebec. I feel it was a bad and unnecessary error by Bourassa at the time, and through subsequent amendments and court decisions the language laws of Quebec have continued to provoke sensitive and difficult issues both for that province and the country.

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Years later, Prime Minister Stephen Harper brought fresh and positive perspective to the unique relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada with his historic proclamation that, "the Quebecois are a nation within a united Canada". That was a statement of great political judgement, one that I fully support, and one that hopefully will help bring a spirit of lasting unity to our nation.

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Probably more than any other Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney was a master at managing his caucus and making every member feel a part of the team. He went out of his way to get the opinions of backbenchers, and he made sure that cabinet ministers listened to what other MPs had to say. The result was a very strong and unified caucus that carried the government messages forcefully and well to all the constituencies across Canada. That is largely how the great political battles of free trade, the GST and the Meech Lake Accord were waged during my years as an MP in Ottawa. They were all vastly important policy directions we were pursuing for the long term future of Canada, winning the first two, and sadly losing the last one. The results, and the impact on Canada and its people from those policy decisions, have been profound and far-reaching and are clearly to be seen today.

I had long been attracted to the potential benefits of a free trade agreement between Canada and the USA ever since negotiations between the two countries commenced in 1985. From my perspective, Canada had

by far the most to gain by marketing our goods and services to the vast USA economy, and we were giving up relatively few commercial advantages in doing so. For reasons that I have never understood clearly, the Liberal Party and its leader John Turner were vehemently opposed to implementation of the free trade agreement, so it became an issue for vigorous debate during the election campaign. It was a fight that I enjoyed, because I was convinced it was the right thing for Canada.

While negotiations had been concluded in late 1987, and the Free Trade Agreement actually signed by the leaders from Canada and the USA in January of 1988, the FTA did not come into force until January 1, 1989. Thus, the 1988 election battle was really about whether or not to repeal what had already been accomplished. Thankfully, the Mulroney government's victory at the polls did constitute a ratification of the FTA, although the results of the vote were sobering. The PC Party lost forty-two seats from its memorable victory of 1984, and the Liberals actually gained forty-three seats overall. However, the remaining total of one hundred sixty-nine PC seats was still a solid majority mandate for Mulroney to proceed with lasting implementation of that historic Canada-USA agreement.

The impact of the FTA has far exceeded the most optimistic of expectations. In a paper entitled "Free Trade Works" former Minister of International Trade, Hon. David Emerson, states that two-way trade between Canada and the USA has tripled, and constitutes the largest such economic relationship anywhere in the world. An estimated three million jobs in Canada are based on our trade with the USA, and the most amazing statistic for me is that it provides Canadian companies, large and small, with access to an American market of three hundred million people. That is a favourable ratio, better than ten-to-one between our respective populations.

In 1992, an expanded North American Free Trade Agreement to include Mexico was signed by leaders from all three countries, and in June of 1993 NAFTA was formally adopted by the Parliament of Canada. It is true that free trade has had some weaknesses for Canada, notably the

failure of the dispute-resolution process to reconcile the softwood lumbe trade issue. It is hoped that over time such deficiencies can be improvec although in 2009 the new Obama government campaigned activel against many elements of NAFTA. I have a personal sense of confidenc that the practical realities and overall benefits of free trade, especiall between Canada and the USA, will continue to prevail and that America protectionism will not develop as many fear might become the case.

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One of the most arduous political tasks that any government i Canada ever faced was the introduction of the Goods and Services Ta especially during the months in advance of its implementation o January 1, 1991. It is never easy as an elected representative to talk abou tax increases to constituents, and the GST was especially controversia It was first proposed by our PC government in 1989, initially at a rate c nine per cent, and was designed as a value-added tax applicable to a products and business transactions, except certain essentials such a groceries, medical services and some financial services. It was intende to replace the 13.5 per cent Manufacturers Sales Tax that the federa government had in previous years imposed at the wholesale level o manufactured goods, and which had been hurting our internationa competitiveness.

For many months, in every constituency including my own i Fredericton-York-Sunbury, MPs were busy explaining and defendin this difficult new legislation. The process became ever more contentiou and volatile, with three MPs actually resigning from our PC federa caucus. As well, there was high drama in the Senate, when the majorit of Liberal senators refused to pass the tax into law. Using a rar constitutional provision, Prime Minister Mulroney was able t temporarily increase the number of senators, thus giving the Progressiv Conservatives a majority in the upper chamber. Yet, even then, th legislation was further delayed as the Liberal Opposition endeavoured t talk it down with a filibuster. Those were interesting days indeed to be Member of Parliament.

Despite the tax being lowered to seven per cent by the time it became enacted, public anger and resentment lingered on. There is no doubt that the GST was one of the major causes for the sharp decline in popular support for the Mulroney government, and for our eventual defeat in 1993, after Kim Campbell had been elected the new leader. In retrospect, the GST has in fact delivered tremendous financial values to Canada's taxation structure, and has become an accepted reality of life for most Canadians. I think it is fair to say, (although obviously looking back with some bias), that the GST provided the revenues by which the subsequent Liberal governments were able to balance budgets, and indeed have surpluses. This was obviously also assisted by the massive economic benefits arising from free trade.

While the Mulroney government was defeated for implementing these vital innovations in Canada's economic structure, both Paul Martin and Jean Chrétien became political heroes largely as the result of the tremendous increases in prosperity that those measures produced. During his tenure as Finance Minister, Martin was able to play the strong and disciplined financial role that Canadians wanted, but only because Mulroney had given him the economic and fiscal tools to do so.

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During my five years in the House of Commons, one of the most historic issues was the debate about the Meech Lake Accord. This was a preliminary but firm agreement between the federal government and each one of the provinces and territories to bring Quebec as a full participating signatory within the Constitution of Canada. Ratification of the agreement was required by the Parliament of Canada, and by each of the provincial and territorial Legislatures before it would become effective. At the original preliminary signing, there was a complete accord among all the leaders who were in office at that moment in time.

This achievement to unify the country, when even Pierre Trudeau was unable to have Quebec included in his earlier repatriation

of the constitution, was to have been the crowning glory of Brian Mulroney's prime ministerial career. Throughout the process he had worked and led tirelessly and passionately for adoption and ratification. In the end when the Accord was denied unanimity in Newfoundland and Manitoba, it was both a political and a personal tragedy for Mulroney and, in my view, a long term failure for the country.

I had stayed fairly close to the Meech Lake debate out of personal interest, and one of the most extensive assignments that came my way was to serve for several months on the Special Committee for Canadian Unity, under the chairmanship of the Honourable Jean Charest, during the most dynamic days of that debate. We travelled the country engaging in very comprehensive discussions about the future of Canada, especially the status of Quebec, and I felt very much involved in what was obviously an historic process.

It was just prior to the submission of our report to the House of Commons that cabinet minister Lucien Bouchard resigned from Parliament in protest over the Accord, double-crossing his old friend Mulroney, and retreating to Quebec to help create the Bloc Quebecois in 1990. Over the next several months, the momentous debate about the Meech Lake Accord ended in failure, as did the Charlottetown Accord which followed it. Those were discouraging results for all who had worked so hard to bring about constitutional unity in Canada. On this particular issue, I admired Brian Mulroney for his leadership, and was saddened to see the toll and the pain which this defeat brought to him.

Throughout the many months of political drama about the Meech Lake Accord I was convinced, and continue to remain so now, that it would have brought lasting unity to our country. When it was first adopted in 1987, Premier Richard Hatfield of New Brunswick was one of its strongest supporters and advocates. When his own government was annihilated in a provincial election later that year, the new Premier Frank McKenna became the first politician in Canada to even raise the possibility of *not ratifying* the Accord. It seemed a thoughtless and partisan position to take at the time, but McKenna felt it was necessary

for him to make it clear that he wanted to review New Brunswick's position on his own terms, and not merely be a rubber stamp to his predecessor's commitment.

Thus, the precedent was set, and it seemed to become legitimate for others to back away from firm and formal undertakings to which all provinces, territories and the federal government had been previously committed by their properly elected leaders. It soon followed that Premier Clyde Wells of Newfoundland took a similar and much more determined position, and gradually the strong political ties that bound the original Meech Lake Accord unravelled. Ultimately two provinces, Newfoundland and Manitoba, failed to have the Accord ratified by its deadline date of June 23, 1990.

Dramatic efforts were made over succeeding months to have the principles that were contained in the Meech Lake Accord adopted through a national referendum process, which became known as the Charlottetown Accord. The proposals in the referendum were defeated in a national vote taken on October 26, 1992. To his lasting credit, Premier Frank McKenna of New Brunswick had soon realized his error in judgement, and belatedly but aggressively threw his full support behind the ratification process. Unfortunately, opposition to the Accord led by Wells and former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau could not be reconciled or denied, and Brian Mulroney was devastated by the final failed result.

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The opportunity to serve on standing committees is also available to all Members of Parliament, and there is much scope to do good work and have an influence, depending of course on the committee to which one is assigned and the role to be played. Not all standing committees count for the same impact, and during my time they for the most part were felt to be "playgrounds for backbenchers", to which the cabinet and the PMO paid scant attention. I feel that over the years most standing committee reports, some of them containing excellent research and

recommendations, have merely gathered dust and eventually be discarded from old government file rooms.

That is a shame for our parliamentary system in Canada, a some changes are now evident that do give standing committees far mc authority and relevance than in the past. Recent issues such as t Mulroney-Schreiber affair have brought parliamentary committees in the public spotlight, and it is my sense that future MPs will work ve hard to keep them there. They do represent a structure where t collective voices of Canadians can be heard on a wide range of importa subjects, and governments could do well to use them more and to ta their reports and recommendations seriously.

Having said that, however, based on my own experience standing committees while in Ottawa, our extensive and well-intention work resulted in almost an utter waste of time for all who were involv – MPs themselves, parliamentary staff, professional consultants and the so-called witnesses (citizens, institutions, corporations) who we called before the committees to testify. In the end, despite weeks, mont and even years of well-reasoned debate and consideration, and wel written reports, hardly a soul in government (i.e. the cabinet and PM(paid the least bit of attention to committee recommendations, except course when current and controversial issues were involved such Meech Lake then, and Mulroney-Schreiber now. Even in those tw specific cases, the impact on government policy has been negligible.

During my time, this fact was not for lack of trying. On th Forestry Sub-Committee we produced a report entitled "The Forests Canada: The Federal Role," which endeavoured to clearly lay out are where federal collaboration within the bounds of provinci responsibilities for forests could make meaningful and mutual beneficial contributions of scientific expertise, national coordination an financial support. We submitted that report to Parliament; I twisted th arm of Forestry Minister Frank Oberle relentlessly to make him read i I sought and was granted an audience with the Prime Minister to discu it – all to no avail. The final answer was that forestry is a provinci

esponsibility, (yet we have recently spent years fighting the so-called oftwood lumber battle with the United States under the Free Trade ıgreement). Our report was not revolutionary, but some of its ecommendations might have strengthened the coordination and ohesion of Canada's national policy, and even improved our negotiating trength in the softwood lumber battle.

On the Environment Committee, which was chaired by my PC olleague David MacDonald (formerly a United Church minister from 'EI, and a previous minister in the Joe Clark government), we had a trong team of people which included Paul Martin, then a new Liberal 1P, (destined to become Prime Minister for a short while); the late :harles Caccia, a veteran Liberal MP and former Minister; the recently eceased Jim Fulton, an NDP Member of Parliament from British :olumbia with a strong environmental reputation; and several others. 'hat was more than twenty years ago, in 1988, when the environment nd global warming were just becoming critical issues. So we committed urselves to a prolonged study of air-quality matters, with the intention f writing three separate reports over two years, which we did in fact ccomplish. Already of course, emissions of carbon dioxide had been lentified as the primary cause for global warming; and so along with ıany other questionable elements being released into the air around us nd to the atmosphere, the subject matter for our standing committee 'as both current and critical. The debates around our table were intense, ɔmetimes partisan, but generally well focused on the issues. It didn't :ally matter, however, because these excellent reports were never read :riously by those in a position to take action on them.

During my years on the Communications and Culture :ommittee, we crafted an excellent report entitled "Communications nd Culture: The Ties That Bind." It contained some excellent bservations and recommendations about all the subject areas involved, nd we were applauded for the quality of the publication. Again, no overnment action resulted.

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On a normal day-to-day basis, I maintained a reasonably good record of attendance in the House of Commons, with regular interventions through statements, questions and the occasional speech. All the while, back home in my constituency, we had a very active and responsive office to serve all of the people I represented. This included monthly "town hall meetings," where I explained and debated government policy on a host of issues in an open and public way. My weekends were almost always filled with constituency functions and lots of personal contact with the people in my riding. It was a very busy life.

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I will long remember one such weekend function in Fredericton at the time of the Oka confrontation between First Nations and the Canadian Army near Montreal in the summer of 1990. Members of the local St. Mary's First Nation had organized a rally on the front steps of City Hall and invited me to be one of the speakers. The issue at Oka had grown very tense and gained major national attention with the prospect of serious violence becoming more real every day. The local rally that day was clearly intended to be in sympathy with the native people at Oka, and when it came my turn to speak I was graciously handed an eagle's feather by a leading member from St. Mary's, a woman who encouraged me to "speak the truth!"

It was an intimidating situation, but I was determined to deliver a clear and constructive message, which was to avoid violence at Oka at all costs. This was obliquely critical of the native armed barricades, so no sooner were the words out of my mouth than that same women rushed up the steps and unceremoniously grabbed the eagle's feather from my hand. It was an embarrassing moment, but I finished my remaining few words, and then stepped down. All the while the television news cameras were rolling, and later that night the scene was shown across the nation. If there is one unforgettable image of my entire political career, it would have to be of that woman stripping the eagle's feather from my hand as a gesture of disrespect for my words and position as a Member of Parliament.

For the remainder of that weekend, and on into the first few days of the following week, that scene was played and replayed as the Oka pressures continued to intensify. Without question it caused me great emotional turmoil, but I remained comfortable and confident that I had said the right things. On the spur of the moment in our weekly caucus meeting a few days later in Ottawa, I was able to introduce a touch of humour that brought relief and laughter to what was otherwise a very tense situation. After the Prime Minister had asked me to describe the event to my colleagues, he offered me the chance to summarize, and so I said, "You must know how I felt, Prime Minister, because a bird without a feather is a very bald bird indeed!" That brought down the house, and has been a great story ever since.

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Taken overall, I would have to say that my tenure as a Member of Parliament for five years in Ottawa was an interesting and broadening experience, one during which I was able to do quite a lot of good in serving my constituents at Fredericton, and one in which I was helpful on the big issues like free trade and the GST in communicating at the local level. There were even some observers who felt I was among the better Members of Parliament, and on one occasion I was recognized by *Maclean's* magazine in that context. Compared to being the Mayor of Fredericton, or the Minister of Natural Resources in New Brunswick, however, it was a rather hollow period in my political career.

Had I been fortunate enough to be appointed to cabinet, that would surely have made a tremendous difference and given me a real opportunity to make a distinct contribution. In the absence of that, however, I found myself in the parliamentary support cast, which is a snide way of saying that being a backbencher is a tough way to make your life count. That is not to say that the role of an MP should not be respected as an important and critical commitment in our democracy. It is to say, however, that the future leaders of our nation must find better ways to use the multitude of excellent resources that MPs bring to Ottawa. That will, of course, involve major change in the way we make

our federal government work. There are no easy recommendations, bu a long process of development must be started to make the MP's job more meaningful to themselves, to their constituents and to the country

Despite all of that, we did not find our time in Ottawa to b wasted years in our personal lives. Quite the contrary, both Peggy anc I greatly enjoyed the days we spent in our ground-floor condominiun on Somerset Street, and the many good times with our colleagues anc friends at caucus parties, state dinners, and the occasional trip tc another country as part of a parliamentary delegation. Two of thos latter occasions we remember especially: the first was to Charleston South Carolina, on an RCAF transport plane where the nose whee buckled upon landing and we slid down the runway like woundec ducks. Pictures of that incident were splashed across the country, anc the big joke was that, "the nose wheel buckled because of the weight o MP's golf clubs on board!"

The other really big trip was to Japan with the Prime Ministe and his wife Mila, to visit Canada's new consulate headquarters in Tokyo That small delegation included Liberal MP Doug Young and his wif Jackie, also from New Brunswick. At one official dinner with the Prim Minister of Japan, Peggy and I were seated at the head table with th Mulroneys, so we have some very proud memories. That trip remindec us of our official visit to London in 1971, another auspicious state visi at the invitation of the Lord Mayor of London, while I was then th Mayor of Fredericton. Almost twenty years lay between those twc memorable adventures.

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I believe that political service is among the highest and mos honourable of life's callings. Yet, it seems a career almos psychologically resistant to real respect because its access is based or soliciting votes to gain office. It is not enough to merely offer you service; you must seek and compete for the opportunity to serve. Ir the same manner that "familiarity breeds contempt," so too can the ac

of asking citizens for their votes. That process frequently creates expectations which are beyond fulfillment. The longer a politician is in office, the wider becomes the gap between good intentions, great expectations and reality.

Some of the most successful politicians have been those who clearly convey that they don't need the job, and could easily live without it. For example, Pierre Trudeau often thumbed his nose at both the media and the electorate, and the more he did it the more they seemed to respect him. It seems that one of the best ways to be successful in politics is to be able to skillfully demonstrate that, while you do desire to serve, you can accept losing and have other things to do with your life. A sort of reverse psychology, I suppose. That is not to suggest arrogance as an approach, (which would seldom work, although both Trudeau and John Crosbie are examples to the contrary), but rather an independent yet visible attitude of sincere purpose, coupled with a healthy dose of self-confidence.

During the course of my political involvement I have had the privilege and the pleasure to know, or at least to meet, seven of Canada's Prime Ministers. The first one, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, invited the Mayors of Canada's principal cities to dinner at Sussex Drive one evening in 1972, with only a few days' notice. It seemed like quite a long and expensive trip from Fredericton just for a meal, even with the Prime Minister, so I asked our city clerk at the time, Harry Gough, for advice. His answer was very prompt and emphatic, "Get your ticket, and go to that dinner!"

So off I went with a great sense of anticipation and excitement, feeling just a little bit important that the Prime Minister wanted to hear my opinion about urban affairs in our country. Suffice it to say, there was not very much time for any real discussion. With about twenty other Mayors present it was hard to get a word in edgewise, even had I had a contribution to make. I recall finding Trudeau rather slight and formal in appearance, although I knew how dynamic he could be. On that occasion he was very quiet, almost aloof, throughout the evening. It was

hard for me to imagine then how he would become and remain such a powerful presence in the political history of our country.

The second Prime Minister I knew was Joe Clark, whom I had supported at my very first Progressive Conservative leadership convention in 1976, where he outlasted all of the preferred candidates to emerge as the winner on the fourth ballot. He was young and eager to make acquaintances at that time, and a friendly relationship seemed to click between us. There was no doubting his genuine nature and the integrity of his character, so I strongly supported him in every way that I could. However, there was clearly an awkwardness about his manner, and even his political judgement seemed to be out of step. I always felt that Joe was too soft and compromising when it was time to take a stand; conversely, he would seem to get tough and unyielding when it was time to be diplomatic. That's just my own way of describing it, but his awkward image was captured in many ways throughout his career, and unfairly caused him to look weaker than he really was. In the end, of course, he allowed himself to be outmaneuvered during an historic confidence vote in the House of Commons in February of 1980, and then lost the subsequent election to Pierre Trudeau who had spontaneously "un-retired" to lead again.

A little more than two years later, at the PC biennial convention in Winnipeg, Joe resigned his leadership even after winning a sixty-seven per cent measure of support from the delegates. Both of those events helped to confirm for me that he lacked the killer instinct needed to survive at the top of the political game. A few months later on June 11, 1983 in Ottawa, however, he fought bravely at a new leadership convention, losing to Brian Mulroney only on the fourth ballot. With great character, he urged the party to unite and he agreed to continue serving in Mulroney's cabinet.

Of all the politicians I have known, I sincerely believe that Joe Clark is one of the most capable and distinguished parliamentarians to have served the Canadian people. He is extremely intelligent, a strong formal orator and a man of impeccable truth and honour. In my view, his

finest hour was serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs for Brian Mulroney after having lost the leadership in 1983. Holding great respect for his country, and even though with presumed distaste for his Prime Minister, Joe Clark rose above personal pride to represent Canada as one of its best foreign affairs ministers ever. Everyone who knew him in that PC government caucus in the early 1990's could not help but admire the outstanding character of this man. History will record him with a full measure of respect, far more than sufficient to erase any of the awkward memories from his younger days.

Another former Prime Minister I got to know after arriving in Ottawa in 1988 was John Turner, to whom I was introduced by Adam Zimmerman, a mutual friend from Noranda Inc. That was shortly after Turner had lost his leadership to Jean Chrétien, so he did not spend a lot of time in the House of Commons. Fortunately for me, a few years later we found ourselves on the same board of directors at Nexfor Inc., and I got to know John somewhat better. He was a gruff but friendly man, always with a twinkle in his eye, and we got on well together exchanging political opinions along with the business of our board. I remember admiring Turner from afar when he was a young Member of Parliament, and it seems a bit sad that such an attractive individual only had a short time in the Prime Minister's office, thanks to the baggage left for him by Trudeau and the telling defeat by Brian Mulroney in that memorable television debate during the 1984 election campaign.

Of course, I have known Brian Mulroney longer and better than any of the others. While I have never been in his inner circle, there has always been an easy recognition between us. Ironically, at my first opportunity to know him at all, I turned down an invitation to serve as New Brunswick campaign manager for his successful run to win the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party in 1983. My name was recommended to him by a mutual friend, Jim Ross, and we had lunch at the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel late in 1982, only a few months after I had resigned from the New Brunswick Legislature. While I was very

flattered to be asked, and would ordinarily have been excited by the opportunity to participate in his campaign, there were many reasons why I decided to decline: first, JWBCO was still in serious difficulty and I really had no time to spare; secondly, I would have been fearful that the prospect of my business failure would risk potential embarrassment to his campaign; and thirdly, a long held respect for Joe Clark whom I had supported strongly in previous circumstances. I would have felt uncomfortable at being seen to change loyalties so visibly and quickly from one leader to another.

Putting all those factors together, I thanked Mulroney for his confidence in asking me, and suggested that he stick with Jim Ross to represent him in New Brunswick, which I know had been his first choice. This was the course that he followed, and Jim was able to recruit Sandy LeBlanc for all of the detail and legwork, which he carried out very well. Needless to say, when I was later an MP in Ottawa and wishing for more responsibilities, I often reflected on my decision to decline that original offer to join the Prime Minister's team. As it was, cabinet seats for New Brunswick were held by Gerry Merrithew and Bernard Valcourt, while Jim Ross, who had taken on the New Brunswick campaign leadership responsibility, eventually became a Senator. I cannot help but smile at what my role might well have been, had I made a more positive decision to go to work for Brian Mulroney that day twenty-eight years ago over lunch at the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel.

During my five years in Ottawa, I must say that I considered Brian Mulroney to be an outstanding leader of both our caucus and the country. He impressed me with his intelligence, his passionate convictions and his inspiring abilities to lead the complex group of men and women in his government. At weekly caucus meetings, he exhibited a genuine spirit of inclusion that not only maintained caucus unity, but sent each one of us back to our ridings with a spirit of resolve and conviction about the difficult issues with which we were constantly dealing. We were highly motivated to represent Mulroney and our government well.

I did, of course, also recognize some of his vulnerabilities, especially his extreme partisanship and tendency to ridicule or dismiss those in opposition to him, such as Jean Chrétien who survived to succeed him for ten years as Prime Minister. There was no disguising either his desire for public acclaim, and his tendency to gloat too visibly in moments of success. Apparently, the majority of Canadian citizens were able to perceive those weaknesses through television much more vividly than those of us who were close to the scene, as witness the results of the 1993 election when only one member of the previous Mulroney caucus, Jean Charest, was re-elected to Parliament.

Frankly, I liked Brian Mulroney and his wife Mila, and while in Ottawa found the consistent media criticism troublesome and hard to understand, given the close-up view to which I was regularly exposed. There was one respected journalist in particular, Roy MacGregor, who in my view simply could not seem to find a good word to say about Mulroney in any situation. I decided to contact him in an effort to reconcile our differing views, because I found myself in accord with MacGregor's outlook on most other subjects. We had lunch together on at least two occasions during 1992, and it became clear there was no way that I could redeem our government or the Prime Minister in MacGregor's mind. He intensely disliked the way he perceived the country was being run and, in retrospect, that was obviously a view a majority of Canadians came to hold.

As I have worked on the final version of this book, the incredible and disappointing revelations about Brian Mulroney's secret meetings with Karlheinz Schreiber, and his acknowledged acceptance of cash concealed in envelopes at those meetings, have shocked and bewildered me. Despite his competitive and prideful nature, and his penchant for cronyism and locker-room talk, I had always felt confident about his basic integrity and fundamental good character. From my experience during five years in his caucus, I thought he was a politically courageous and deeply committed Prime Minister, with an agenda of difficult and challenging goals for the good of his country.

He was also an inspirational leader, with a totally united caucus and party solidly behind him.

Notwithstanding the Schreiber affair, and based on the context of 1988 to 1993, I must again say that I continue to take great pride and satisfaction in the epic achievements of the Mulroney government during its final term. In looking back at those five years in the strict context of leadership and accomplishment as a Prime Minister of Canada, the record of history will give Brian Mulroney good marks.

Although Kim Campbell and I entered the House of Commons at the same time in 1988, I never did develop a sense of bond with her as an individual. She was obviously very smart, and had quickly developed a high political profile that seemed attractive to Prime Minister Mulroney, who promptly put her in the cabinet. I am not left with any strong memories of Kim's performance as a minister, however, and it was more than surprising to witness the discreet manner in which Mulroney selected her to become his successor. It looked like bad judgement then, and of course that proved to be the case. She has a great deal of talent, and has demonstrated class and character in sustaining a respected public profile after an embarrassing defeat as, very briefly, Canada's first female Prime Minister.

I did not know Jean Chrétien very well at all, although we were briefly on a first-name basis while he was Leader of the Opposition and I was still an MP in Ottawa. Although it was great sport in our caucus to make light of Chrétien, and to enjoy Mulroney's caustic comments about him, it was my sense he was a good and friendly man, possessing a long and proud record of service as a parliamentarian, and very genuine in his aspirations to eventually become Prime Minister of the country. His subsequent ten-year term in the highest office of the land has clearly demonstrated the quality and the capability of Chrétien as an individual. He is able to be tough and mean-spirited if treated badly, but on balance he continues to strike me as a person of great political skill and judgement, and with a noble sense of purpose about serving Canada well. It is a little beyond my comprehension how he allowed the

sponsorship scandal to develop during the last years of his term in the Prime Minister's office; it seems obvious that he does not pay sufficient attention to details, and often trusts others to a fault. In any event, I think history will record Jean Chrétien as being a strong, steady and distinguished Prime Minister of this country.

I first knew Paul Martin when we both entered the House of Commons in 1988 and served together on the Environment Committee, where we became collegial friends quite quickly. He was engaging and intelligent, but did not impose his opinions too strongly, and was awkward like the rest of us in learning the ropes. Great things were expected of him from the start, but he moved in a modest manner and steadily seemed to gain the admiration and respect of all the MPs around him. He was universally seen to be the logical successor to Jean Chrétien, and it was no surprise that he was appointed Minister of Finance and performed in that capacity so well for so long. What is totally baffling to me, however, is the manner in which he allowed his relationship with Chrétien to deteriorate so visibly and dramatically, such as to literally split the Liberal Party into separate warring camps. That strikes me as totally uncharacteristic of Paul Martin, at least so far as I briefly knew him. It also disappoints me, because I would have thought of him as an outstanding Prime Minister had he displayed the patience and grace to wait for the job until Chrétien was done with it. If the split between them had not occurred, I doubt that Chrétien would even have run for his last term, and Martin would have succeeded him four years earlier. As it has turned out, Martin's very promising political career was ended after one of the briefest prime ministerial tenures in Canadian history.

My impressions of Stephen Harper did not get off to a good start, especially when he resigned as a Member of Parliament in 1997 to join the National Citizens Coalition, a group whose president he became in 1998. That organization has brought more disrespect upon parliamentarians than any other in the country. The founders, Colin Brown and his successor David Somerville, had spent more than three decades criticizing MPs about their pension plans, and had steadily helped the media create

a stigma in Canada about elected politicians, particularly those in Ottaw Harper's choice to join and lead the NCC left me with a distinct distaste fo the man, even though I had never met him.

When Harper later decided to renew his political career an returned to the House of Commons as leader of the Alliance Party, hi stock in my mind improved somewhat, and I developed a grudgin respect for his success in doing so. What really has won my support fo Stephen Harper, however, was the practical and skillful manner wit which he initiated and carried out the merger of the Alliance Party wit the Progressive Conservative Party, to form the new Conservative Part of Canada. This was a restructuring that simply had to be done for th strength and stability of our parliamentary democracy at the federa level, and one which was frustratingly long overdue. In the course c those merger negotiations, I took the initiative to voice my support fo the process, and actually had the opportunity to speak with Harper abou my concern over his role in the National Citizen's Coalition. Th response he gave me was reasonable and rational. By committing his ow life and career to renewed political leadership, he provided all th confidence I required to support him fully, which I continue to do.

Until rather strange events in December of 2008, when hi economic statement provoked a potential coalition response that cause Parliament to be prorogued in haste, I had thought that Stephen Harpe would perhaps become the best of all the Prime Ministers I have know I still hope that may become the case, because he surely has the intellectua capacity and the political capability to do so. There seems to be competitive gene in his nature, however, that is displayed at the wron time, almost akin to Joe Clark's awkwardness. When Harper had th perfect opportunity – following his improved minority victory in th election of October 14, 2008 to lead with skill and diplomacy in troublin times – he appeared to allow a zealous attack on the Opposition to totall disrupt his intended governance, and created the risk of a coalition cou which was embarrasing for him. I could not understand the justificatio for that approach, and hopefully his inherent skill and character wi

eventually prevail to form a much-needed majority government in Canada. *(As this book goes to print on March 28, 2011, a new federal election has just been called for May 2nd, so we shall see how events unfold.)*

Also prior to the so-called "coalition crisis", I thought that Stephen Harper had demonstrated a sense of personal discipline and self-respect that would steadily raise the profile and dignity of politicians everywhere, especially with his determination not to allow the Parliament Hill press gallery to bulldoze the political process in Canada. That is a repetition of the will that Trudeau demonstrated throughout his prime ministership, keeping the media at arm's length to the point they seemed to hate him, fear him, respect him, even love him, all at the same time. I am not so sure now, but I did initially feel that Stephen Harper might be able to achieve a similarly objective media relationship.

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I do not wish to infer any disrespect for the media. As I learned at City Hall in my very early days as Mayor, the role and the purpose of the so-called fourth estate is vital to the success of our democracy, and the media must have open and truthful access to the news as developments occur. However, elected political representatives must serve their constituents diligently and responsibly as they see fit, and not merely attempt to curry media favour in order to please their own egos or to nurture their future election aspirations. It is the media's job to report on the political process, and to reflect public opinion as they may variously perceive it should be expressed. It is not the media's role to govern the country; that is the responsibility of elected representatives. Unfortunately, there are many politicians who are intimidated by the media, and many media representatives who would like to govern but have never risked a run for elected public office. It is important in any democracy to know "which tail is wagging the dog."

I feel that my political knowledge and abilities matured as a Member of Parliament, even though I did not make it to the cabinet. There seemed to be a new subject or experience to learn about every day,

and trying to make the occasional good result happen from my position as a backbencher helped to inspire new skills at finding my way through the maze of multiple conflicting interests on the Ottawa scene. The practice of politics is a very competitive game at the best of times, but fiercely so at the federal level, with the battle most frequently among one's own caucus colleagues. There is a lot of truth in the saying that "in politics, it's every man for himself."

Being "On the Hill" is to be in a uniquely different world, quite clearly removed from the streets of downtown Ottawa. The atmosphere is one of security and formality, and it seems almost impossible to get your mind off parliament and politics, which so intensely pervades the air. While you are there, the whole complex seems to be the centre of the universe.

There is a tremendous sense of Canadian pride and patriotism that wells up when I stand back to look at the Parliament Buildings, and reflect on the great history of this wonderful country they represent. For all that I feel was unrealized and unaccomplished by me during my time in Ottawa, there is also a lasting feeling of respect and satisfaction for having had the privilege to represent my constituents and my country in Canada's House of Commons. It is an experience that I would recommend to any Canadian.

During my time in Ottawa, the PC Party in New Brunswick was attempting to recover from the dead after losing all its seats to Frank McKenna's Liberals in the fall of 1987. Following the interim leadership of Mac McLeod, who had been Agriculture Minister in the former Hatfield government, there was a new leadership convention won by Barbara Baird-Filliter, and she became the first female leader of the provincial party. After a couple of years of dedicated effort, she decided to return to her professional law practice and her family life. She has since been appointed as a judge in New Brunswick.

On April 26, 1991, former Premier Richard Hatfield passed away, and the various memorials to his life seemed to spark revived energy for

a renewal of PC Party fortunes in the province. A new leadership convention was being planned, and some of my friends, including Fred Beairsto, felt quite strongly that this was an opportunity for me to leave the backbencher's role in Parliament and return to New Brunswick, with the exciting challenge of leading a successful rebuilding of the provincial party. At the outset, there was only one marginal candidate who had declared his intentions to seek the leadership, and there was a feeling I could win the job quite easily. Another name being mentioned was Dennis Cochrane, former Mayor of Moncton and previously a Member of Parliament himself, who would be a very well qualified candidate if he decided to run. I had mixed feelings about the opportunity myself, because it would be a long hard fight to renew the organization given the total devastation of the 1987 election. It would take years to even get a few seats in the Legislature, let alone ever getting into the Premier's office.

At the same time I was becoming concerned about my own long term financial security, having sold JWBCO at the time of going to Ottawa. As well, our remaining property business, Bird Holdings Ltd., was experiencing serious rental vacancies, particularly at 440 Wilsey Road where the New Brunswick Housing Corporation had decided to terminate its substantial lease after several years of occupancy. To a considerable extent, my political aspirations were waning as I began to contemplate my later years, and the need to rebuild my own business career.

Thus, I declined to enter that race and the field was left to Dennis Cochrane who easily won the leadership. He went on to serve well as leader, but did not get to the Legislature and eventually retired from the post quite abruptly to become the Deputy Minister of Education in Nova Scotia. I have always held Dennis in high respect, and am pleased that he is enjoying a successful career, returning to Fredericton in late 2009 as President of St. Thomas University.

Having passed up any prospect of returning to provincial politics, I decided to conclude my term as a Member of Parliament, with the likelihood of not running again. As the saying goes, however, "the road to hell is paved with good intentions," and there was one more campaign

yet to fight. After the demise of the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Agreement, it was not very long until Brian Mulroney announced that he would be retiring as Prime Minister. Soon after Mulroney's announced resignation, the momentum of a new leadership contest to replace him developed rapidly. Amazingly to me, Kim Campbell was in the lead, almost openly endorsed by Mulroney, and she had attracted quite a strong base of support on the prospect that she would become Canada's first female Prime Minister. My own choice for the job was Jean Charest, who I felt was the only credible candidate capable of keeping the PC Party of Canada in power.

As the game of politics sometimes goes, one of Charest's closest friends and allies, Bernard Valcourt of Edmundston, having thought briefly of running himself and finding little encouragement, decided to support Kim Campbell with the obvious premise that he would become one of her more powerful ministers. That decision by Valcourt, a blatant act of disloyalty to his friend Charest, not only tipped the balance in Campbell's favour but also led directly to the selection of the wrong leader, and the resulting destruction of the federal PC Party in the election of 1993.

After five full years in Ottawa, with a variety of mostly satisfying experiences, and even though still merely a backbencher, my public profile remained quite high and favourable. Having worked very hard in New Brunswick on behalf of Jean Charest's leadership campaign, my political spirit was also keen and I felt a sense of responsibility both to my riding and to the PC Party. So, despite my misgivings about returning to Ottawa and my worries about a secure business future, I decided to offer accountability and run again in the 1993 election. It was a case of my passion for politics and public service again overwhelming my common sense and business judgement.

As the records from that October 25th election in 1993 show, I was soundly defeated by Andy Scott, with more than eight thousand votes in the difference, and so I graciously accepted the end of my political career. The one real sadness on that occasion was that my good friends, Bert and Winnie Bates, who had worked together in leading my

ocal campaign were devastated that we did not win. I still feel badly that was not able to pull it off, especially for them, but in many respects I felt moment of relief that I was now free to again pursue my first love of usiness, and to begin rebuilding my own financial security. In all of hose days and years in elected office, I had never thought of pensions as eing an important consideration, until I realized that I did not have ne. It was surely time to get back to work.

To his great credit, Andy Scott made a remarkable career for imself in federal politics, eventually becoming Minister of Indian ffairs and Northern Development, and the senior political minister in aul Martin's cabinet for Atlantic Canada. He participated in developing he Kelowna Accord for First Nations in Canada during his final term, ut unfortunately that achievement did not get implemented and was ost when Prime Minister Stephen Harper won his first minority overnment in January of 2006. Nevertheless, Andy made some notable ontributions and developed his political instincts extremely well, especially after a first-term disaster when he lost his initial cabinet post or speaking in public earshot about responsibilities as Solicitor General). was impressed with Andy as a very shrewd politician with an especially rong sense of social values. He deservedly was very successful in getting imself re-elected for one term after another, until retiring as a Member f Parliament prior to the October 2008 federal election.

My own approach has always been a little less political than most ampaigners, which can be both a strength and a weakness. I have long elieved that door-to-door canvassing is a waste of everybody's time, for xample, although these days it is an expectation. Similarly, I always felt wkward standing around the Boyce Farmer's Market on Saturday ornings just to be seen there, pretending to be a shopper. Those titudes were undoubtedly considered campaigning weaknesses in the es of my political colleagues. However, my own philosophy has always een that in both business and politics the primary purpose is to serve the stomer and the constituent well, and the sales or electoral rewards will llow. That does not mean trying to please all of the people all of the

time, because that is impossible to achieve. There are broad policies and principles to be followed in the practice of politics, I believe, which are generally designed and intended to achieve the most good for the most people. Frequently however, the issues are not readily understood or accepted by the very constituents they are intended to serve.

Two excellent examples from my five years as an MP were the Free Trade Agreement and the Goods and Services Tax. Both of those issues represented major change in government policy for the long term good of the country, and over the past two decades they have both proven to be vital pillars of Canada's prosperous economy. Yet they were hard-fought and highly volatile issues during almost all of the last term of the Mulroney government, and in the end played a large part in bringing about the virtually total defeat of the Progressive Conservative Party under the leadership of Kim Campbell.

I have always accepted that federal election loss with a tinge of pride, because in many respects we lost for having introduced and implemented difficult and unpopular measures that were essential to Canada's future prosperity. As I have previously expressed, a critical credo in politics is, "better to be defeated for the right reasons, than elected for the wrong ones." While many practicing politicians would consider that a naive, even dumb approach to seeking elected office, I feel strongly it is an indispensable principle, especially for any political candidate who wants his life in public service to count for something more than merely getting elected and re-elected. It is the only way that the practice of politics will ever gain respect for the high calling as is deserved.

It is true, as many politicians would say, that you have to be able to stay in office to get things done. That point of view too quickly becomes perverted to merely doing those things that will keep you in office, which in a lot of cases may not be for the long term public good. It is the responsibility of every politician to exercise his best judgement, and to take actions that will most fully serve the ultimate interests of the constituency and the country. That sometimes takes the courage and the vision to support positions that are unpopular in the short term, and frequently risks

defeat at the polls. In my view those are exactly the kinds of politicians that citizens want to have in office, and because they don't see enough evidence of such political integrity, a state of cynicism creeps in to the public perception of politics with the result that all politicians are damned, whether deserved or not. In recent decades the disrespect for political representatives has became pervasive, and there seems little sense of public appreciation for even the better of our MPs, MLAs or Councillors.

There is no shame in getting defeated, especially for the right reasons as I have said. Timing is the key to everything in politics. If one has had a good run, and the mission has been mainly accomplished, bowing out at the top is worth considering. In 1993, for what I felt were good reasons I chose not to do that, but have never regretted the defeat which followed and ended my political career, nor the subsequent events that have flowed from it. In the seventeen years since that time, my life has continued to be a full and rewarding one.

Chapter 10

Returning to Business

By the time in 1988 that I decided to become a Member of Parliament, my family business interests were comprised of two main components – JWBCO, the original company; and Bird Holdings Ltd. which owned our buildings, leasing commercial space to JWBCO and others. Given the devastating business experiences of earlier years while I served in the New Brunswick Legislature, there was no hesitation this time in recognizing that absentee ownership was not something to be tried again in JWBCO, even though I felt deep regret at the finality of giving up my stake in the company that had been my life's work.

Of all the strategic moves made throughout the life of JWBCO, the sale of my ownership to key employees was one of the most significant and most difficult for me to accept. We had thought for many years about a formula that would introduce the concept of employee ownership but an effective arrangement had never been worked out, in retrospect because I was not fully committed to it. Finally in 1985 I had

ıade an arrangement with Geoff Munn and some of his colleagues to urchase one-third of my shares in JWBCO, with an option to buy the :maining two-thirds at some mutually agreeable future time. In ebruary of 1990, more than fifteen months after I had become a lember of Parliament, all of my remaining ownership of JWBCO was)ld to them, and BHL became my remaining business vehicle. Apart om some debt that had been provided by myself and BHL to help cilitate the employee purchase, there were no further ownership ties) the distribution business I had founded in 1958.

In addition to Geoff Munn, who has always been a loyal and :dicated JWBCO employee, there are four other managers and ıareholders who should be noted for their steadfast allegiance and rong performance in sustaining and rebuilding JWBCO's business. The rst is Eric Pineault, who some years ago agreed to move to Halifax as anager in Nova Scotia; the second is Ernie Lean, who has long been ıe company's strongest sales representative in the construction ıecialties field; the third is Bill Johnston, who joined the company as umbing and electrical manager in Fredericton while I was still in the :gislature and who over the years has developed those operations to :come major elements of JWBCO's sales and profits; and last but not ast is Brian Moore, a chartered accountant we were fortunate to engage our new comptroller in June of 1988, and who, from his start with VBCO, helped to add sound financial management to our operations. his quiet but capable and convincing way, Brian provided the reports ıd information needed to manage the company, exercised supervision ıd control over such critical areas as accounts receivable and inventory vels, and nurtured confidence and support from both creditors and nks. He has been an important partner in this group of five men who ırchased full ownership of JWBCO in 1990.

As their team has moved the company forward in a profitable and stainable manner, I believe each one of these men has deservedly ospered in his own right. In fact as I write this part of the story, more an twenty years from the time of my own departure from management,

I am told that with the exception of Geoff Munn, who will be staying on as president and general manager, the other four original investors in my shares have decided to initiate retirement plans of their own. A new wave of employee financing has been organized to bring on the next generation of owners and managers of JWBCO. This ongoing process of stability and renewal of the enterprise makes me proud of the roots that were created so long ago, and of all the fine and capable people who have devoted parts of their lives to its development, growth and survival.

Looking back over all those years in the affairs of JWBCO, I would love to do it over again, but my strategy next time would be to share the ownership with key employees every step of the way. Had that been the case in the past, JWBCO might well have become the national distribution business of which I had dreamed. The magic of employee ownership is that there is a lasting multiplier effect. It does not remain necessary to own all the shares, because by spreading them around among key employees the value of the whole takes on a potential to grow more quickly and strongly than the sum of its parts. It is the ultimate motivation plan, where one plus one will equal more than two, sometimes three, four or even ten. This is a hard concept for owners to accept with confidence, as it was for me, but there are many good examples where owning half a loaf eventually has become worth a dozen.

Since my days at JWBCO ended, I have had the opportunity to serve as a director of a number of companies with a wide range of employee incentive and motivation plans. In all cases, the most effective companies provide significant rewards for superior performance results. One of the most successful of these is the ADI Group, with worldwide operations run from Fredericton. Until recent months in 2010, when the ADI Limited division was sold to Trow Global, that company was entirely owned by its employees, and its significant growth and value was driven by that ownership. Some of these lessons remind us of a common sense proverb: *sharing the potential is the best way to achieve it.*

Only late in the life of JWBCO did I became committed to the notion that I should sell the business to the employees, and it has turned

out to be a wise decision for all concerned. Those five individuals who bought it have demonstrated beyond a doubt that having a stake in the ownership of a company is the highest form of incentive and motivation. Having a personal interest brings out the best in every person, both in performance and allegiance. The difficulty in selling even partial ownership is taking the first step. I did not do so until deciding to sell all of the company at one time. Although I have been well paid for my shares, I must confess to a sense of sadness in not still being part of the ownership of JWBCO, a feeling not about money or influence or power, but about still being with a business family that I brought into the world more than fifty years ago. That company was a wonderful adventure and a prosperous career for me, and in a way I felt that I had finished my job. It was then time to move on to new challenges in my life.

To the generous credit of the present owners, they have kept my name on the business and my picture in the front office lobby. In so doing, they have continued to afford me immense pride and satisfaction in this steadily growing company that spans the Atlantic Provinces. More than any other thing I have done, it has truly been my primary life's work. I wish all its owners and employees extremely well for the next fifty years to come.

However, my own business activity has not ended with the termination of my involvement at JWBCO. To the contrary, starting with my return to BHL after "involuntary retirement" from the House of Commons in November 1993, my career in private life has been ongoing, interesting, varied and generally quite successful. Following that election defeat, I joined Debby Parsons in a very big and very empty building at 440 Wilsey Road where we started the rebuilding of Bird Holdings Ltd. I found it was Debby herself, a wonderful employee for by then twenty-five years, who had used her astute property management experience as the key element in BHL's survival while I was away in Ottawa. Our subsequent recovery from what was then a near-death business existence in 1993 to a relatively sound property company with a healthy commercial portfolio in 2010, (including the

development activities of Bird Lands Limited), has remained a credit to Debby, and has kept us both fully occupied over the past seventeen years. During that time, as I will describe, Gerry McBride also was engaged to become president of BHL.

I was happy to get back to the reality of working at my own business again, which had been long neglected and diminished by another political adventure, this time at the federal level. As was also the case during my terms in municipal and provincial government, and despite the busy and exciting activities of public life, there was always on my mind the underlying worry about the foundation of my career and the security of my economic future, all rooted in my personal business affairs. There is no question that every company pays a high price for absentee ownership. BHL was still operational, though it certainly needed a lot of attention to become a healthy and viable business again. Thus, there was no question that losing the election had some redeeming features, and there was not a single day that I missed being on Parliament Hill once I began to give the affairs of my family and Bird Holdings Ltd. full time and attention. There was important work to be done, and it was time to get back at it.

Overall, BHL was losing money, so here once more I was back from political life to start rebuilding a business almost from scratch. One of the first major challenges I faced was the situation at 440 Wilsey Road where, following the exit of the New Brunswick Housing Corporation, we had more than 25,000 square feet of office vacancy, and were also confronted with a large mortgage loan from Royal Trust on what had become an almost empty building. For many years prior to my tenure as an MP, actually since the final term of Louis Robichaud as Premier of New Brunswick in the early 1970's, NBHC had occupied these office premises. In fact, it was NBHC that requested we enlarge the office structure several years earlier and to construct additional office space over the back warehouse area. Regrettably for us, in the latter days of the McKenna government as the NBHC lease was expiring, a new president was appointed to that Crown corporation who felt its head office should

ɔe moved elsewhere. Eventually, the NBHC offices were fragmented to ɔther locations in government buildings around the Fredericton area, ınd the loss to us was almost a fatal one.

During those difficult economic days in the early 1990's the nortgage had actually been transferred to the Adelaide Investment Corporation, which was a successor following the demise of Royal Trust. As a last resort, I decided to seek some form of reprieve on the monthly nortgage payments until such time as we were successful in finding new enants for the large vacancy. I composed a proposal to Adelaide, equesting that we be given relief from all interest costs while we would ontinue to pay down the principal until the mortgage was completely etired. The regional manager for Adelaide was Jeff Coates in Halifax, a nan I did not know at all, but we arranged to meet at his office and he eceived my proposal in a reasonable businesslike way. He told me it vould take several months to get a final answer, but in the meantime he greed to freeze the interest charges, and we committed to continue aying the principal amounts on a monthly basis. This was a tremendous elief, even though temporary at the time, taking BHL a step back from he edge of what might have been total insolvency.

Quite by coincidence, our banker at the Toronto Dominion ranch in Fredericton at that time was Gerry McBride, whom I learned ad worked for Jeff Coates many years earlier in the equipment financing usiness, and they were close friends. Fortunately, we were doing some usiness with Gerry and TD in financing the purchase of the old athurst liquor store building, so I decided to make him aware of my egotiations with Jeff Coates. While I have no knowledge of what eferences may or may not have been exchanged, I certainly do feel that erry must have been supportive of us.

Eventually, the formal Adelaide response arrived. We had been iven permanent interest relief, which we would be able to write off ompletely as soon as the principal was repaid. That was certainly one of he great days of reprieve from anxiety and stress in my business life, a ery serious one among many which I have experienced over the past

fifty years. The risks of any business can be very real, and the worry is excruciating; by contrast the relief of finding secure solutions is indeed exhilarating. Much like climbing mountains, running a small business entails the agony of risk in order to gain the ecstasy of achievement. Being an entrepreneur is certainly a special way of life.

As a small coincidence to the Adelaide experience, some years later in 2002 Gerry McBride joined BHL on a full-time basis, and has since become the president of the company. This relationship occurred when I was approached by Gerry in the early fall of that year, advising that he was seeking a new career opportunity and asking if I would be willing to serve as a reference. My first reaction was, "Why don't you think about joining us at BHL, perhaps to become my successor if we get along well together?" After a few days of discussion and an exchange of letters, Gerry joined us in November and it has been a constructive and positive experience for all parties since that time.

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When I was elected a Member of Parliament in late 1988, again in order to remove any perceptions about conflicts of interest, it was necessary for me to resign all of my public business relationships. Five years later, after I had been defeated in the 1993 election, it was encouraging to be contacted once again by Brascan chairman Jack Cockwell and Noranda chairman David Kerr, and to be given the opportunity to rejoin the Noranda board. A couple of years later, Frank McKenna also became a director of Noranda, and I eventually moved to an affiliated board at Nexfor Inc. The Noranda and Brascan companies have in later years evolved into Brookfield Asset Management, of which Frank McKenna is now Chairman of the Board of Directors. The Brookfield organization is one of Canada's very best international corporations, and I have long been proud of my association with it.

At Nexfor, the president and CEO was a former forestry executive from the New Brunswick scene, Dominic Gammiero, whom I had known twenty-five years earlier as manager of the particleboard mill

near Chatham. Under Dominic's guidance over the next several years, Nexfor expanded dramatically in its manufacture of oriented strand board, and was extremely profitable during the building boom early in this new century. One of the most successful moves by Nexfor during those years was the purchase of three major OSB mills from International Paper in the southwest USA. I remember being on a salmon fishing trip at Fraser Lodge on the Kedgwick River, (I think the year was 1999), and John Dillon, CEO of IP, was also there as a guest. It was around the lodge during that trip when the prospect of those OSB mill transactions was first raised, and not many months later the acquisitions were accomplished. It has been interesting for me to look back on that fishing trip and to realize again, as I have long known, that great personal relationships can be established in fishing camps that may eventually lead to significant business results. There is simply no question that all other things being equal, it is easier to do business when a bond of friendship has been established.

In my opinion, the Fraser Lodge on the Kedgwick River provided one of the best salmon fishing experiences in the world. It possessed a wonderful potential for building strong and lasting business relationships, and yet Brookfield seldom used it to full advantage. It has been hard for me to understand how such an asset could be taken so lightly by a large company, having worldwide opportunities to realize promotional and marketing value from it. I have tried on numerous occasions to make that case with colleagues around the boardroom table, but unsuccessfully so, and the Fraser Lodge was sold to private interests in 2007.

My term with Nexfor ended when the company was subdivided in 2004 into two separate entities – Fraser Papers, once again as its own public entity, and Norbord as a separate OSB company. The decline of housing markets and the adverse economy over subsequent years has had a dramatic impact on both of these companies, leading to the sad bankruptcy of Fraser in 2009, once such a strong symbol of New Brunswick's forest industry. The thread of my involvement with the

Brookfield organization has continued as a trustee for the Acadian Timber Income Fund. This new fund in early 2006 purchased the ownership of all of Fraser's forest holdings, including management of its timber license with the Province of New Brunswick. There is a recognition of very long term value in the forests of New Brunswick, as in all the forests of the world, and investors are attracted to the concept of specialized forest holding entities operating as public companies. This involvement provides me with a continuing knowledge and understanding of the evolution of New Brunswick's forest industry. This has also allowed me a valued continuity with Brookfield, even though I am a little beyond their normal retirement age for directors.

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Fortunately, because of the earlier sale of my shares in JWBCO I had managed to save a modest amount of capital. When I returned from Ottawa in 1993, I was able to go shopping for business and investment opportunities while at the same time searching for tenants to fill the vacant spaces in BHL buildings. I sent letters and made telephone calls to bankers, lawyers and accountants that I knew right across the Maritimes, and explored a number of opportunities without much success until a truly golden one came at me right out of the blue: Atlantic Building Cleaning Limited.

Coincidentally, those are the colours (gold and blue) of the Royal Bank and it was Peter Conrod, a senior officer with that bank in Halifax who in mid-year 1994 contacted me by telephone to say that he wanted to introduce an aspiring young entrepreneur, Bob Crozier from Halifax. As I quickly learned, Bob was a personable and intelligent individual with a long history of management success in running a building cleaning business that was owned by the Sobeys interests. He had a first refusal for the opportunity to purchase the company if he could only raise the capital. We talked for a few hours, and eventually I offered to invest $200,000 for one-half of the company providing that he would raise $100,000 and also commit his right of first refusal and management contract for the other half of the shares. Within a week we had signed an

vestment agreement, and Bob then proceeded with negotiations to ercise his right to buy the company.

A shock was awaiting us, however, as Sobeys advised him that ey had decided to sell the company to a larger organization who were epared to pay more than Bob had offered. He called me in Fredericton e rainy day, obviously discouraged and resigned to the fact that we d lost the deal. In his view Sobeys were too large to fight, even though had a legal right of first refusal from them. At that point, and with ob's pessimistic approval, I decided to renew an old contact that I had th David Sobey, then the top man in the organization. I decided to use e Harrison McCain approach, much in the manner as he had helped e several years earlier.

I said, "David, there are people in your company who are about take advantage of a good young man and a good business opportunity a way that is inconsistent with the Sobeys reputation for integrity!" e said, "Bud, what the hell are you talking about?", and so I explained e situation. Obviously taken aback, David said, "That is a matter ider the jurisdiction of my son Paul, and I will talk to him about it ght away." The next day Paul Sobey was again in touch with Bob ozier, and discussions were renewed. During that day, I asked Bob to me speak with Paul Sobey, and once more I laid the reality of the atter on the line. "A right of first refusal is not an invitation to bid," I id, "rather, it is a right to buy the business at whatever fair price you ve been offered and are willing to accept!" In the end he agreed with at position, and the following day Bob Crozier called me with great citement in his voice to say, "We are now the owners of Atlantic ilding Cleaning Limited!"

That was the start of a long and successful relationship. Bob ozier demonstrated that he is an outstanding manager, and knows how make a profit. Almost in the first year, the business had earned enough cover our initial investment, and working together we were able to nerate a lot of new growth. ABC had not done very much business in ew Brunswick, but soon we had some very good contracts, including

the University of New Brunswick. Our relationship with the Toronto-Dominion Bank was amazingly good, and it was unbelievable to me just how far they were willing to loan against contractual cash flow in this cleaning business, whereas in my experience it always seemed impossible to borrow enough money against inventory and receivables to keep up with the growth potential. This was a wonderful change, and for the next ten years Bob Crozier and I worked very closely together as equal partners, and never had a serious argument.

He did all of the management work, while I provided consultation and advice, and continually promoted the company for new business wherever the opportunity presented itself. My investment was made through Bird Holdings Ltd., so the active role with ABC was an extension of my responsibilities on behalf of BHL. In later years a subsidiary to ABC was created by way of an acquisition, and the investment in those new shares was made through our respective wives, Janet and Peggy, who each held a fifty per cent interest which was linked to ABC through a formal management agreement. Overall and collectively, these investments with the Croziers in the building cleaning business were among the best our organization had ever made.

One of the unique features of the relationship with Bob Crozier was that we were equal ownership partners, which meant that we could only move forward in agreement together. At first glance, and certainly my prior thinking over the years, such an equal arrangement has a high risk of being unworkable because one partner could obstruct the other. However, I have now come to believe a fifty-fifty ownership is the best of all worlds for intelligent people who wish their business to be successful, because impasse, paralysis and procrastination are all negative forces, and thus cause equal partners to seek and achieve consensus to make sure such negatives do not occur.

We were both always mindful of the need to move forward in decisive ways, and we took every step to ensure compromise and consensus without conflict. We had also designed a Buy and Sell Agreement, which provided a so-called "shotgun clause" in the event

that one partner or the other decided they wished to withdraw from the relationship. This clause is truly double-barreled, because the person making the offer to buy or sell must also be prepared to do the reverse at the same offering or asking price.

The result is that neither party can force a value decision over the other, or exercise a perceived advantage, without taking the real risk of having the decision turned in the other party's favour. I know there was the odd occasion when Bob was bothered by how much money the Bird interests seemed to be making from his efforts, so I occasionally reminded him that if he decided to become impatient and exercise the shotgun clause, he might very well find that he was the one that got shot, (i.e. that we would reject his offer, and buy the business ourselves). Anyway, so far as I know, there never was a serious thought by either party in this regard.

There was also another provision in our agreement that gave Bob Crozier the unfettered right to buy our shares at the end of ten years. This is what he eventually decided to do and, after a rigorous valuation process in 2004, he bought our ownership. The pricing reflected a major gain on our original investments, plus ten terrific years of continuing profitability. Within six months of the closing of our transaction, Bob Crozier called me one day in 2005 to say that he had just sold the entire business to the Empire Company in Montreal.

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There are two prominent New Brunswick companies with which I have also been privileged to serve terms as a director: the ADI Group in Fredericton, and the Barrett Corporation in Woodstock. While I have acted in an advisory way for a number of smaller local business and public service organizations, ADI and Barrett are both unique businesses with extensive operations, both nationally and internationally, that have each achieved significant success from home offices founded in our province.

The ADI Group has been an employee-owned engineering organization with headquarters in Fredericton, but with projects around

the world. It was started by four university professors in the early 1950's and has grown steadily under strong leadership until now it is recognized as one of the best managed companies in all of Canada. From its early days, ADI was a valued customer for JWBCO in architectural and engineering products, and I came to know its people quite well in almost all aspects of their business. In fact, one of ADI's distinguished leaders over the years was the late Ken Bartlett, a close friend for much of my life who served as one of the trustees for JWBCO during my term as Minister of Natural Resources.

I had long admired ADI for the quality of the people it employed and for the increasingly complex construction projects that it designed and managed. In 1999 it was flattering for me to be invited by CEO Hollis Cole, to serve as one of three outside directors on the ADI Board. The other nine directors were employees elected by their fellow shareholders and colleagues each year, so the role of an outside director was an important one in bringing independent views and perspective to discussions of both strategic and operational issues. One of the first things to be encountered by an outside director at ADI is that the employee directors, especially Hollis Cole, hold very strong views and great confidence about the way they are already doing things. It struck me from the start that, in order to play an effective role as an outside director, there was a need to take positions and to state opinions more forcefully than usual, and to be prepared to defend them in logical and substantive ways.

One example arose from my own admiration of ADI and the great potential that I feel it had even beyond current bounds of success. In fact, I have characterized ADI as being "the best kept secret in the construction industry in Canada." Coming as I did from a sales and marketing background, one of the first views I expressed at a board meeting was that, "perhaps ADI needs some sales and marketing people to help expand the customer base of the business." This was met by a gruff and almost angry rejection from Hollis, who said, "we don't need any damn salesmen around here, because engineers can do their own

selling as well as anyone else could do it for them." Well, that exchange made it clear that Hollis did not have much time for salesmen, and it also put me in my place as a new director.

Nevertheless, I persevered and eventually found that Hollis likes a good argument, and he respects opposing opinions if they are strongly defended. Frequently, his first reaction was intended to provoke some vigorous confrontation to get at the right answers. Over several months, it was eventually decided to create a new position of marketing manager, and several candidates were interviewed for the job. The winner was Colleen Mitchell who had just moved to Saint John, but she was so clearly the best candidate that even Hollis agreed to let her commute between home and ADI's Fredericton head office in order to get the job done. There can be no doubt how well Colleen has served the organization, because ADI's marketing messages are more professional than ever before. They have developed good advertising and communications strategies and, with Colleen's help, Hollis has become an effective public speaker and has been recognized as one of the Top 50 CEOs in Canada. In very recent years Colleen Mitchell has been promoted to the new executive position of Vice President-Marketing, and the ADI story is no longer just a best kept secret coming from New Brunswick.

During my seven or so years as a director of ADI, there arose many interesting challenges and a great deal of satisfaction in working with a strongly committed group of fellow directors and employees. As a first in its history, ADI allowed the outside directors to invest in share ownership, which I did as fully as possible and realized a very rewarding return when my extended term on the board finally ended. This occurred in early 2007 when ADI completed a management refinancing to bring the next generation of its senior employees into ownership. One of the largest challenges facing any company, but especially a private group that is owned entirely by its employees, is the double-barrelled issue of succession and future development. With financing ever an issue in terms of transition from the present generation to the next, and with the need for training and

motivation of senior people towards eventual leadership, the ADI board spent many long hours trying to figure out the best way forward.

One of the easiest ways, of course, would have been to sell completely to some anxious competitors, such as Lavalin or Stantec, but there was a strong will among old and new employees at ADI to keep the company fully owned by its employees. It was decided to do just that, and a plan was devised for the young generation of shareholders to eventually buy out the older ones. With a great deal of intense work by Hollis and his management team, the financing was found at terms which were extremely favourable because of ADI's performance record, and the transition was achieved very successfully for all concerned. It was at that point I sold my shares into the buyout and retired as an ADI director with great pride and respect for that whole organization. I am also pleased to say that my years on the ADI board have produced some good and lasting friendships, including a warm relationship with its leaders, Hollis Cole and Paul Morrison, both of whom I admire greatly. Our own companies use ADI services regularly.

From an organizational and motivational point of view, I think that ADI has represented a great model of employee ownership, which I feel is the ultimate incentive plan for any enterprise. It is difficult for many companies to achieve, but the more that employees can have a personal stake in the game the better they will perform and the more the company will prosper. In my view, ADI has long been a company with tremendous potential, and with many profound achievements already realized over the past sixty years. It has an even larger vision to fulfill going forward to the end of its first century. The primary strength of ADI is the quality of its professional people and the capability of its leadership, as well as its model of employee ownership.

Some employee-owned companies operate like a cooperative, where everyone feels that ownership has its privileges, almost like some sort of a social club. ADI does it differently and does it right: ownership has obligations to work to protect and build your own investment, and to inspire others to do the same so that the whole continues to grow

larger than the sum of its parts. There should be no confusion in anyone's mind at ADI about where responsibility lies, and certainly ownership is no guarantee of keeping one's job. That disciplined spirit is what makes this business successful, and that success is exemplified in the recent reorganization whereby so many people increased their financial commitments, and together achieved strong support from their bankers. It is a very solid business, and I wish I were still part of the coming generation rather than of the passing one.

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Late in 2009, another major upward reorganization took place in ADI when an apparently irresistible offer was received from a national engineering organization, Trow Global, wishing to purchase all of the Atlantic Region operations, which included ADI's architectural and engineering divisions with offices in Fredericton, Saint John, Moncton, Halifax and St. John's. It was decided ADI would accept that offer, so Paul Morrison, President and CEO, led about seventy-five per cent of ADI employees to join him, becoming the Atlantic division for Trow Global. The other twenty-five per cent of ADI's employees will remain with the ADI Group under CEO Hollis Cole, which will continue to operate the international water treatment systems being marketed around the world, and also the manufacturing division of membrane tank liners and covers from its plant in Oromocto. The design-build division will also remain with the ADI Group. This rather surprising development in ADI's wonderful success story has occurred with unanimous support from virtually all shareholders, and the two new organizations will remain closely related, both on a professional and a personal basis. Again, it leaves me with a sense of pride that I was a part of that dynamic organization for at least a few years, and with a sense of intrigue and envy that I could not have been involved in these most recent exciting developments.

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The Barrett Corporation of Woodstock offered another opportunity for me to play a director's role in a major New Brunswick

private company, other than my own. I was invited to join their boa late in 1999, not long after having persuaded Ed Barrett to be part of t Gas New Brunswick joint venture. During that process we seemed to h it off quite well, so it was a compliment to get his call a few months lat asking me to become involved in their business.

The members of the Barrett family are entrepreneurs in eve sense of the word, following the great traditions of New Brunswi families like Irving and McCain, although thus far not to the sa immense scale of success. There is a vision shining in the eyes of Bill a Ed Barrett and members of their family that I believe will one day lea its mark on this province in a big way. Following the footsteps of the father, Malcolm (Mac) Barrett, with whom they once held exclusi distribution rights in half of Canada for the Arctic Cat snowmobile lin brothers Bill and Ed have taken the family company to new levels diversification and risk management through opportunities acro Canada, in the USA and even around the world. Their efforts we publicly recognized in the fall of 2010 when both men were induct into the New Brunswick Business Hall of Fame.

In any business, particularly one that is driven by a strong wo ethic, high energy and ambitious goals, taking risks is commonplace b so must be the capability for resilience and survival. The Barretts ha displayed these qualities time and again, often producing great succe stories from the edge of failure. In their early days, after establishing t Arctic Cat snowmobile line so successfully in eastern Canada, t relationship was abruptly terminated by the manufacturer who decide to do its own distribution. That decision had the effect of bringing t Barrett Corporation almost to a new beginning, yet only a few years lat they negotiated the purchase of Atlantic Rentals from former ML Danny Cameron of Fredericton, and built it into a powerhouse profitable service centres across the Atlantic Region. More than a decad after that, the large American chain United Rentals paid the Barretts handsome premium to acquire Atlantic Rentals and fold it into the international organization.

The devil of the distribution business is that success can sometimes lead to loss of the distribution function, when a manufacturer may decide to covet all the margins of profitability. This is what happened to Barrett with Arctic Cat, and a similar result almost occurred after they had become the successful national distributor in Canada for Star Choice TV systems, when that technology was in its early days. Again, after several years of successfully developing the market across Canada, the rights to the product were purchased by Shaw Communications and Barrett was left once more with a marketing and distribution job well done, but with no lasting role to play.

Undeterred, the Barrett brothers used the knowledge they had gained about the communications industry to search out new opportunities. They found an exciting void to be filled in delivering high speed broadband internet services to rural and suburban communities laying beyond easy reach of the big companies such as Bell, Rogers and Telus. With efforts that required an important knowledge of technology, highly skilled people and especially significant capital expenditures, the Barretts have been able to successfully launch a new corporation called Barrett Xplore Inc. which is now building both wireless tower and satellite installations in small communities throughout the country. By the end of 2010 BXI will be serving close to one hundred and fifty thousand subscribers, and the potential is just starting to be fully recognized. (I have had the good fortune to be able to subscribe as a moderate investor in BXI's future, which is seen as a long term return. As well, at our BHL building on Alison Boulevard in Fredericton, BXI became a valued tenant with an important customer service centre located there.)

It has now been more than ten years since I first joined the Barrett board, and it has indeed been an interesting and rewarding experience. My stance as a director has been perceived as conservative almost to a fault, which would be a surprise to many people who knew me in my own business life, especially bankers who would tell you that I have always been too aggressive and without sufficient fear of risk. In

comparison to the enterprising spirit of the Barrett brothers, however, and perhaps because I have grown a few years older, my instincts have become all too cautious as I urge them to cash in on one success before risking more to pursue another opportunity. It is really quite an irony to think of the many times I have placed my own business life in serious peril to climb the next and higher rung on the ladder; and yet I have found myself saying, "go slow" to the Barretts as they constantly search for bigger and better prospects. Perhaps it is age, but more likely it is seeing success at levels of business risk I had never engaged myself. Thus, it is with considerable respect that I recognize the Barrett achievements, and almost with awe that I behold some of the daring opportunities they are consistently willing to pursue. I feel a great sense of privilege and appreciation for the years I have been able to associate myself with the Barrett family, and I am more than a little proud of the reflection that I have enjoyed in their success.

A few years ago, when I was thinking about how I would develop a succession plan for our Slate Island fishing and hunting property on the Miramichi, the Barrett brothers volunteered an interest in eventually owning our fishing lease and our lodge. With very little negotiation we reached the basis for such a transaction, one that will provide assured access to Slate Island for my family until the end of our days, while maintaining a well-managed operation. This is another very pleasant and satisfying dimension to the relationship I have enjoyed with Malcolm, Bill and Ed Barrett, and with Bill's son Josh, friendships which I know will continue for many years to come.

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Over recent years, Bird Holdings Ltd. strengthened its commercial real estate portfolio in New Brunswick by constructing new buildings for Purolator and Gerrard Ovalstrapping, as well as investing in development properties at both Fredericton and Moncton. We purchased key lots of land in both cities for future development and in late 2009 optioned a similar investment at the McAllister Industrial Park in Saint John. All of our existing buildings have been refurbished, and almost fully

rented to such first-class tenants as Enbridge Gas, Coast Tire, Dillon Consulting, Kerr Controls, Blockbuster, Office Interiors, Barrett Xplore, FedEx, Atlantic Hydrogen and the Province of New Brunswick.

We have found that the current generation of construction costs is sharply higher than in years gone by, so the base rental rate required in a new commercial warehouse building is now in the $8.00 per square foot range on a net basis versus little more than $5.00 a decade ago. This has caused many prospective customers to prefer owning their buildings instead of renting, which has made the commercial leasing market more difficult. Yet, BHL has remained viable and growing, with some good locations in New Brunswick.

In the course of the last few years, we retreated completely from prior operations in Nova Scotia. This did not happen by way of strategic planning or direction, but merely as the result of good opportunities for divesting – first our shopping centre at Sackville, then the Shoppers Drug Mart store in Spryfield and, early in 2008, the large office warehouse building at Strawberry Hill. Consequently, we have been spending very little business time in Nova Scotia recently.

Since my return to BHL in 1993 we have also continued to search for investment opportunities as diversions beyond our real estate operations, and presently own shares in Barrett Xplore and Sunpoke Energy. Previous investments in Atlantic Building Cleaning, the ADI Group and more recently Enbridge Gas New Brunswick have been profitably sold, while others such as Expert Gas and the Pixel Factory have ended unsuccessfully.

A new area of activity through Bird Lands Limited involves development of a waterfront residential property called The Headland at Longs Creek. For many years now I have been convinced that the Mactaquac headpond area is one of the prime natural resource jewels of New Brunswick, with a tremendous potential for residential real estate development that has not been fully recognized. So when we came upon a thirty-acre farm for sale in 2007, and at a reasonable price, I decided

to make an initial investment in this vision for "full time country livin on the river".

Having bought the land from the Kelly family at Longs Creel we have invested quite substantially over the past two years to create twenty-two lot subdivision, complete with paved streets built t provincial Department of Transportation specifications. Most of th road construction work was completed in the spring of 2009, and almos all the lots have now been resurfaced with topsoil and are green wit grass. We have kept them mowed during summer and fall, so that th whole project is attractive and appealing. Unfortunately, despite som strong marketing efforts, we have not yet had any serious interest fron prospective buyers, in large part because our asking prices are on th high side. We are taking a long term view based on the conviction tha we have a unique and rare development site that will bring goo investment returns over time.

In fact, during 2010 I have decided to invest further at Th Headland with construction of two new custom homes on a speculativ basis which will hopefully trigger and accelerate the sale of lots and th early development of this overall property as an active and livin community. A new company has been formed, Headland Home Limited, and a highly respected builder, Marcus Hodgson, has becom a shareholder and will carry out the actual construction of the houses Each developed lot owned by Bird Lands Limited will be sold t Headland Homes Limited as construction is commenced upon them Hopefully, we shall be able to find value and profitability both in th already developed lots and in the construction of the new homes.

A well recommended Moncton designer, Marcus Cormier ha been engaged to help in the preparation of plans and specifications, an we feel that both of our first two homes offer high measures of visua appeal, living functionality and building quality. They will be ready fo occupancy in May of 2011, and we are looking forward to success i marketing them as the forerunners of a custom community along th river, all within good access to both uptown and downtown Fredericton

This is the first time that I have been involved in residential construction since the building of our own home at 7 Simcoe Court more than forty years ago, and I remember from those days what a difficult and detailed decision-making process is involved at every step of the way. These two new homes have been no different, and I have spent many hours fretting over designs, materials, colours and fixtures, to name only a few of the choices which need to be made almost every day. It is an enjoyable process, though, helped a lot by a very good and knowledgeable contractor, and highly satisfying to see each stage of construction develop. Actually, I am having fun in watching these houses take shape, and I think so is my wife Peggy, although she still vows never to actually move away from our present home. We shall likely make many mistakes in this new venture, but it certainly is adding spice to our lives. Perhaps home building at The Headland will become my main retirement job, and hopefully it will prove a profitable one.

Many of my friends, I know, feel I am beginning to lose my business senses but I remain confident The Headland will work out for us in the long run. The world is fast running out of scenic riverfront sites such as we have to offer, and the demand for country living along the St. John River will grow steadily in the years ahead. Besides motivation from the long term economic prospects, I must say that I have greatly enjoyed the challenge of designing and developing the Kelly farm land into The Headland project, which has included a ten-metre removal of the front hilltop previously obscuring the river view from the rear lots. In the end, we have been able to create exactly the site configuration that we had in mind from the start, and there is at least a marginal view of the river from every lot on the project. The Headland has become almost like a work of art for me over the past many months, and I take a great deal of satisfaction in the finished result so far. The financial returns will follow in the fullness of time; meanwhile, we have ownership of a treasure that will only grow in value.

The affairs of Bird Holdings Ltd. and Bird Lands Limited have been my basic business responsibilities for a long time now. I have had

great support from a small staff and we have kept our business heads well above water. Until just recent years, not much thought was given to the challenging issues to be faced in the long term futures of these companies. For all of its existence, the shares of BHL have been owned by my six living children and the estate of my deceased son, Stephen, of which I am the executor. Long ago, those shareholders all signed a resolution appointing me as sole director and general manager of the company, to do as well for it as I could, but more or less to do with it as I wished. I remember saying to them when they were all quite young, "You may own the shares of Bird Holdings Ltd., but remember it is really my business, so please let me manage it my way." This little sermon has been repeated from time to time since then, and there has never been any complaint or lack of confidence on their part. I am pleased to say that my entire family view BHL somewhat as my own estate plan, which will come to them and to some selected charities when I am gone.

The ownership of Bird Lands Limited, and also The Headland project, is actually held by Peggy although I have power of attorney for all of the management responsibilities. As described earlier, we look forward to the continuation of these operations over the next few years, and yet this company can be quite easily liquidated should a need arise to do so.

Over the past few years, Gerry McBride has been responsible for day-to-day management of all of BHL's business, and has assisted with The Headland project and some other family business affairs. Our main goals have been to find new tenants and new properties to build the BHL portfolio. Our management team has consisted of only a few people, including property manager Debby Parsons who has now been working with me for forty-two years. My two sons, Bill in Calgary and Mickey in Brampton, were appointed BHL directors in recent years, and along with Gerry and myself constitute our official board. Our long range vision has been to develop and sustain a stable income-producing commercial real estate business, one that would provide rewarding jobs to loyal employees and a regular source of reasonable dividends to shareholders. Ultimately, we felt, an opportunity would come along to sell or liquidate the business

in a manner that would be beneficial for all concerned. Two such opportunities actually surfaced in the early months of 2010.

The first came through a professional broker in Toronto who was representing a large real estate investment trust located in western Canada. It was surprising that they had an interest in property in New Brunswick, but the investment demand for REITs has been expanding rapidly across the Canadian market and a parallel search for new buildings to add to their portfolios has followed. Consequently, we were able to negotiate a prospective transaction that offered good value for our assets, but if possible we also wanted to sell the shares of our business. This latter course would allow our shareholders to exercise their capital gains exemptions, and for several weeks we endeavoured to complete such a share transaction. In the end, the efforts to make a deal in this manner became too complex, and time ran out. Sadly, we had allowed a good opportunity to pass us by.

Only a few weeks later, however, we learned that Scott McCrea of Overland Realty had sold his company to Cominar Real Estate Investment Trust, a publicly listed corporation on the Toronto Stock Exchange, and had also agreed to manage Cominar's operations in Atlantic Canada. Having known Scott from a previous effort to complete a share sale with him in 2008 I decided to make a telephone call, complimenting him on his own successful transaction and not too subtly letting him know that we were still interested in the possibility of doing business with him. It was only a few weeks until we received a call back for further information, and the process of negotiations began.

It was made clear from the start that a sale of shares would not be possible, so we decided to accept that as reality and proceeded to concentrate on the assets in which Cominar was interested. They consisted of eight commercial buildings in Fredericton and the one property we owned in the Caledonia Industrial Park at Moncton. As part of the agreement, continuing employment would be offered to Gerry McBride and Debby Parsons, as well as to our three-man maintenance crew. (This would leave us with only two remaining buildings, the

recently acquired Urban industrial plant of 47,000 square feet in th Vanier Industrial Park at Fredericton, and a small building in Bathurs which is leased to Blockbuster. As well, we would continue to own thre parcels of commercial land in Fredericton and one in Saint John.)

Following some initial negotiations which were not far apart ever at the start, an agreement of purchase and sale was signed in Septembe followed by an intense period of due diligence which included the renewa of a major lease. Most of this work was carried out on our behalf by Gerry McBride and Debby Parsons, and even though they were destined tc become employees of the buying company, their performance on behal of BHL was outstanding. There was virtually no change in the value between the original purchase agreement and the final closing sale which took place on October 29, 2010. This transaction was a credit to the loyal performance of both Gerry and Debby, and also to the long-standing counsel and competence of our solicitor, Lorraine King, following on the footsteps of all their great service to our company over so many years. It goes without saying that Cominar not only purchased our buildings, but also a large part of the essence of our business as well.

Without any doubt, the sale of most of our business assets to Cominar has been a very good move for our family and our companies. We received good value, and with the sale of our EGNB shares also completed in December of 2010, we are in sound financial condition in all respects. While all of these events have combined to sharply reduce the scale of my business responsibilities, nevertheless I still have lots to do. The immediate challenges are to remain well invested; to sustain leasing of our two remaining buildings; to find opportunities for the four parcels of commercial land; to seek a long term resolution for our fifty per cent ownership position in Sunpoke Energy (which we have shared with Steve & Valerie Buckingham since the early days of natural gas); and to complete and sell the homes being built at The Headland project.

On an extracurricular basis, I shall continue to help complete the YMCA campaign; to renew activities of the FNB Liaison Group;

and to share in the mission of Atlantic salmon conservation. I am also pleased to have ongoing opportunities as a director of both Enbridge Gas New Brunswick and Acadian Timber Corp.

So, for now and the foreseeable future it remains business as usual. Thankfully, in the persons of Angela Carver, Cathy Boucher and Jo-Anne Linton, I still have excellent people to assist in all these endeavours, and I have gone as far towards retirement as I intend to go. So long as Mother Nature allows me to continue, I remain firmly convinced the only way to live this wonderful life is by doing things you like to do, as fully as possible and as long as possible, every day.

Chapter 11

Enbridge Gas New Brunswick

It has been truly amazing how opportunities have come my way. As I have read somewhere, "opportunities are like buses, they come along regularly; the trick is to take the right ones."

In June of 1997, I received an unexpected call from a former business acquaintance in Nova Scotia asking if I would be willing to meet a senior representative from Consumers Gas Company Ltd. of Toronto. This was the oldest natural gas distributor in Canada, with a history going back as far as 1841. It has over the years become a division of Enbridge Inc., one of Canada's largest and most respected corporations.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss whether I would be willing and able to represent Enbridge at the local level in New Brunswick, and to assist as it prepared to bid for the natural gas distribution franchise in our province, which was then being planned and scheduled for public proposals following the discovery and production of natural gas off Sable

Island. At the time Enbridge was already competing for a similar franchise in Nova Scotia where my friend had been helping them out, and I think he intended to expand his consulting assignment over both provinces with me as his point man in New Brunswick. I knew very little about natural gas, except that when I had been Minister of Natural Resources a serious effort was considered to extend the TransCanada system from Montreal to Halifax, and the policy deliberations about passing through New Brunswick fell under my jurisdiction. The senior DNR official responsible for natural gas at that time was Don Barnett, a pleasant and intelligent man who I remembered well from those days. He was now the senior official preparing for the arrival of natural gas in New Brunswick, and was writing the specifications for the franchise that would distribute it in the province.

My first reaction to the invitation was that, having no experience or qualifications in the natural gas business, I should decline because I have always tried to be sure that I could make a real contribution and add meaningful value to any undertaking to which I was committed. Remembering Don Barnett, however, I decided to contact him to obtain a little background information before making a decision. Although cautioning that he could not place himself in a conflict position, as he would likely be helping to evaluate franchise bids as they developed in New Brunswick, Don agreed to speak with me briefly. In the end, all he would really give me was the same information I could read in the newspapers about the general plans to bring natural gas through the facilities of Maritimes & Northeast Pipelines Limited from offshore Nova Scotia across New Brunswick and on to the large markets in New England. Representing the provincial government, Don felt that this project would be an important one for New Brunswick, by making natural gas available as a valuable new energy alternative which would help both economically and environmentally to build New Brunswick's infrastructure.

He also told me that Enbridge had a very good reputation in Canada, but he was unable to offer any information or recommendations about whether or how I might be able to assist them in New Brunswick.

At the very least, that short chat with Don Barnett in the lobby of the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel caused me to realize that something important and innovative was on the horizon for the future of our province. I decided to listen further, and to seriously consider what Enbridge might have to say.

Shortly thereafter I was contacted by Larry Youell, a senior executive from Enbridge in Toronto, and we agreed to get together for a discussion. He was primarily looking for ideas about how to recruit partners in New Brunswick to join Enbridge in the bid for the franchise, because he realized that the main competitor would be Irving Oil and it would be difficult for a non-New Brunswick company to compete successfully against them. We discussed various scenarios, and I suggested that a group of New Brunswick investors could possibly be found to join in pursuing the franchise, thus favourably adding some local content to the process. My thought was that New Brunswickers might be recruited sufficient to constitute about one-third of the investment in making the bid, with Enbridge investing the other two-thirds of the upfront costs. That structure would certainly provide a significant New Brunswick flavour to the proposal, and would be a sufficiently strong political influence to neutralize Irving's home-grown advantage. This concept attracted Youell's interest, so we proceeded between us to put some further thoughts on paper and the concept of Gas New Brunswick was born.

Once I had exchanged commitments with Enbridge to represent them in New Brunswick, my mission started with a visit to both Jim and Arthur Irving, because I wanted those business friends to be the first to know that I was about to become their competitor of sorts. They received me with interest and respect, pointing out that they did not mind competition at all, and were glad to see that New Brunswickers would be involved.

It was estimated that the total cost for preparing the franchise bid would be about $2 million, a high-risk investment with no return at all unless we won the franchise. Therefore, in order to have a real and

transparent one-third New Brunswick participation, it would be necessary to raise $750,000 of venture capital from business people around the province. That was a challenging prospect, but I felt it was an exciting proposition that could be sold in small bites to New Brunswick investors. Together Larry Youell and I mapped out a structure for the franchise bid, as a joint venture involving two-thirds ownership by Enbridge and one-third by our partnership group to be called GasNB. This latter entity would be the vehicle through which New Brunswick investors would participate, in minimum $20,000 units representing one per cent each of the total bid costs. It would be my job to find those investors, and to help persuade them to take the risk and share the challenge.

The prospects for obtaining $20,000 cash commitments on a purely win-or-lose basis were daunting, but I felt that the concept of bringing natural gas to New Brunswick was such an historic adventure that it would excite the imagination of investors. Although quite large, the amount of money was still within a range that even small but true entrepreneurs would be willing to risk for a credible venture. In order to show leadership, and also because I was committed to this investment opportunity, the first subscription was my own through Bird Holdings Ltd. for two units totalling $40,000. That made it much easier and more convincing for me to approach others, having already put my own money on the line in full support of the cause I was proposing.

To assist with the marketing efforts, we engaged Louis Leger and Mario Thériault from Moncton, both energetic, intelligent and bilingual young men, who were able to assist in preparing promotional materials, organizing meeting events and helping to develop contacts, especially within the Acadian business community. Together we planned a campaign that would run over the next six months or more, whereby I would make presentations to every prospective investor we could line up. This was accomplished through individual contacts, through group lunch meetings and occasionally in a public forum. As our organization of committed investors started to grow, we would bring the new GasNB

team together for progress meetings to expand the momentum as much as possible.

In the end we were able to reach our $750,000 GasNB goal through a total of twenty-nine individuals, with some buying more than one unit. In attaining this number I had met personally with more than seventy-five potential investors, so the success rate was about one-third, quite a lot smaller than I had expected. For those who did commit to invest, however, it was not just the financial aspects of the project that were attractive but even more so the exciting adventure of a strong New Brunswick team coming together to compete for this new franchise, and with every intention of winning it. This was true entrepreneurial spirit, and the process was both challenging and stimulating on a continuing basis over more than two full years.

From the very beginning, there was a general assumption that Irving Oil would be awarded this franchise easily and that the competition was a cosmetic and likely hopeless exercise. That did not however take into account the quality of the organization behind Enbridge, one of Canada's largest companies and certainly comprised of some of the most capable executives and employees I have known. Those people were also deeply committed to this project, and were thrilled that a small group of New Brunswickers would join them in the venture, putting both our money and enthusiasm on the line as real partners in a significant business undertaking.

The influence of Irving Oil is so strong in New Brunswick that a great many business people in the province simply did not want to be seen to be in competition with them. That was not a measure of intimidation really, but rather one of respect for the contribution the Irving family has made to New Brunswick over so many decades, which it continues to do. Those who did invest also held Irving Oil in high regard, but like many good competitors they were highly motivated at the prospect of a major contest against the very best company New Brunswick had to offer. I felt exactly that way myself, especially because of excellent Irving relationships I had enjoyed in the past which was the

reason I called on both Jim and Arthur to advise them of my intentions before even getting started.

Besides recruiting the GasNB investment team, my job was also to strategize with Enbridge about some of the policy issues in the proposed structure of the New Brunswick natural gas distribution franchise. We felt that it was vitally important and compelling to have all prospective users committed to a single system. Because installing a natural gas distribution system in the ground is such a tremendously expensive and capital intensive project, it would take all users both large and small to make the system economically viable over as large a geographic area as possible. In other words, we were recommending a totally integrated system with no exceptions.

We already knew that Irving and some other large potential users were negotiating with Maritimes & Northeast Pipelines for direct access to their main transmission line. If successful, they would not have to take delivery through the local distribution system at all. Without these big volumes integrated into one overall provincial delivery system, the economic feasibility for the remaining franchise potential would be marginal, and would seriously limit the geographic extent to which gas distribution could be made available. So a great deal of time and effort was devoted to an intense campaign to win government support for the concept of an integrated franchise, and I made personal calls on each member of a legislative committee that had been appointed to consider this issue, including MLAs Jeannot Volpé and Elizabeth Weir who have since become significant players in New Brunswick's energy policy administration. During that same time we also made professional representations at public hearings, all to no avail.

The government decision, at the recommendation of its legislative committee, was to allow for the establishment of a limited number of single-end-use franchises available to selected industrial users who would be able to access the transmission system directly and bypass the public distribution structure entirely. That government decision caused two prospective bidders for the franchise, SaskEnergy and Co-op Atlantic, to

withdraw from the competition, both advising that without such major industrial consumption on the system the remaining market was insufficient to justify the investment required for public distribution. That decision also gave Enbridge serious cause for pause, but with the momentum and support of local New Brunswick investors building steadily, it was decided to carry on.

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As it has turned out after a full decade of experience, the six large industrials with single-end-use franchises are consuming more than eighty per cent of the natural gas volume used in the province, whereas EGNB's public distribution system has been caused to exist and develop on less than twenty per cent of the load available. Until a portion of industrial savings is being shared with other customers to help moderate costs and accelerate development of the network, it is hard to expect that a successful public distribution system for natural gas in New Brunswick will ever achieve its potential based on only twenty per cent of the natural gas used in the province. No other mature gas distribution system in North America allows direct industrial bypass as it exists in New Brunswick, and clearly it has been a major public policy error in the design of our provincial natural gas system, one which must eventually be corrected.

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In August of 1997, as all aspects of the GasNB campaign progressed, Enbridge assigned an experienced senior employee to the project in the person of Jim Teehan, and we worked closely together from our Fredericton office for the next two years. He brought extensive knowledge of the natural gas business to our efforts, coupled with his own vigor and enthusiasm. The second Enbridge employee on the scene in New Brunswick was a young engineer, Andrew Harrington, who arrived in Fredericton in March of 1998 to assist with preparation of our franchise bid. Working from the same corner office area in the BHL building at 440 Wilsey Road where we had started, Andrew spent the

ext nine years devoted to the affairs of Enbridge Gas New Brunswick, ıd served as its general manager from September of 2004 until he was ansferred back to Enbridge in Toronto in February of 2007.

The first president of EGNB was Arunas Pleckaitis, a senior nbridge engineer who continues to be a director. One of his initial ecisions, and a very successful one, was the appointment of Rock larois from the Enbridge organization in Ottawa to become the first neral manager of EGNB. Taking up residence in Fredericton, and with s abundant natural gas experience, management skills and bilingual pabilities, Rock contributed immeasurably to the establishment of the ew natural gas franchise on a successful operating basis over its early ars. The present general manager, Dave Charleson, moved to edericton in 2007 and continues to guide the affairs of the company ith a firm and steady hand. He has been especially successful in ıilding the company's relationship with the Energy and Utilities oard in a difficult regulatory environment, characterized by volatile mmodity pricing, very competitive electricity rates and more recently 2010 by severe public complaints from a few large customers ssatisfied with their rates.

In mid-year of 1998 the overall direction of the Enbridge itiative in New Brunswick had been assumed by J. Richard Bird, nior Vice President for Corporate Planning and Development at the ılgary head office. By then I was working almost full-time on behalf GasNB and, following a meeting with Richard Bird in Calgary, was signed management responsibility for all of the combined activities the scene in New Brunswick. This was quite a flattering mandate, ven that I was merely acting as a consultant and not as an employee Enbridge. On November 30th of 1998, Richard assigned a senior ıancial manager in Toronto, Lino Luison, to work with us on a part-ne basis as manager of business analysis for the project. Together th Jim Teehan and Andrew Harrington, and also consulting with hn Graham, a senior manager from the Hamilton office of Enbridge, had strong and direct Enbridge support for our GasNB mission. We

remained in close consultation with all of the GasNB investors through regular strategy meetings, and had engaged two local Fredericton lawyers, Bruce Eddy and Len Hoyt, to provide the intensive legal services required, with Len continuing to be EGNB's primary source of counsel to this day. We had developed a strong force of talented and influential people, and our campaign to win the franchise continued to gain momentum.

The only serious setback to our investment team occurred in early August of 1998, when two major and previously committed investors appeared to get cold feet. They had apparently decided that the Irving Oil competition was too strong, so advised that they were rescinding their commitments for business reasons. When news of those two defections leaked out, it was prime print in local papers. Fortunately, within a very few days, five other investors publicly announced their decisions to join the GasNB group, and our momentum was quickly restored and in fact quite dramatically increased. The campaign was heating up, and the media were paying considerable attention to the growth and development of our consortium.

As it eventually turned out, the Enbridge-GasNB bid was the only one seriously considered by the government. After SaskEnergy and Co-op Atlantic had backed away from their intentions to compete, only Maritimes NRG representing Irving Oil was left in the running and its final submission to the government was disqualified for failure to provide specified financial information and guarantees. It was, I feel, a significant tribute to the strength and substance of the Enbridge-GasNB proposal that it was the only one officially considered. Its preparation was a major undertaking over many months, well beyond my original expectations, and involved organizational and development work of a more professional and sophisticated nature than I might ever have experienced otherwise. In the end we won the franchise, but lost the fight to have it totally integrated. It was on Tuesday, September 7, 1999, that New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord announced the award of the franchise to Enbridge. There was a very satisfying photograph in *The*

Daily Gleaner the next day with the Premier shaking my hand while Richard Bird looked on.

Only a few days earlier, there had been a moment of truth within our team when Enbridge seriously reconsidered its position in the light of the non-integrated system and also with concern about some changing conditions that the new Conservative government seemed determined to impose. After a tense series of meetings, and a personal letter of appeal that I presented to Richard Bird and Lino Luison before the final session, the corporate decision was made to proceed. Here are some of the words in my final plea to Richard Bird that day:

"As we commence what will likely be the last day of deliberations about whether or not to accept and sign the gas distribution franchise agreement which has been awarded to us by the Province of New Brunswick, I feel compelled to offer a perspective which may be worthy of consideration before a final decision is made to reject this franchise. In doing so, I am endeavouring to fulfill my responsibilities both as a prospective director of EGNB and as a representative of the minority shareholders in the GasNB joint venture."

"The winning of this franchise by a group involving so many New Brunswick investors is an historic accomplishment that will change the nature and reputation of our province as a place to do business for decades to come. If we allow this award to slip from our grasp, the ramifications could well perpetuate an opposite and damaging paradigm, one of ineptness, weakness and even incredibility. Having had this franchise awarded to our GasNB team is obviously a golden moment that goes far beyond the merits of only the gas distribution system, and I think you know that we shall spare no effort in helping Enbridge to make this moment a memorable and successful one."

As it has turned out, Richard Bird's hesitation was clearly justified because it soon became clear how fragile the business case for this natural gas franchise in New Brunswick had become. During the early years, for example, we were forced to strongly confront the provincial

government with the need to change the legislation from its original *deregulated* concept, to an opposite *regulated* (or so-called fully bundled) model, where EGNB would be allowed to provide all functions of sales, marketing, installation and distribution. These negotiations took a great deal of costly time and effort. More than any other individual, I give credit to Rock Marois for being able to persuade both the political representatives and senior government officials of the compelling need for this change in approach.

What actually happened was that, being a 'greenfield' start-up with no established customer base and offering a brand new source of energy, the deregulated structure simply did not work. While EGNB was quickly in the game installing pipes to distribute the gas, other marketers and contractors were supposed to be selling the gas to consumers and installing gas systems in homes and businesses. With EGNB banned by the original deregulated legislation from carrying out those fundamental functions, very few initial sales were made and competent installation services were hard to find. In short order our new company had a disaster on its hands, with large investments in the ground but very little natural gas being sold to flow through the distribution system. The situation was critical, and our financial forecasts deteriorated rapidly.

The solution, achieved during 2003 by changes in the legislation that allowed EGNB to both sell gas and carry out installations, came not a moment too soon. That false start over its first three years seriously impaired EGNB's long term business plan, with significant implications continuing to the present day.

Adding to those early negative consequences, it had also become abundantly clear that the assumptions and prospects for expanding the natural gas transmission system into northern New Brunswick were going to be remote indeed. The much discussed new 350-megawatt gas-fired power plant to be established at Belledune by Tractebel Energy Marketing Inc., a Houston-based division of a French energy corporation, which was hoped would provide a base load

emand for natural gas sufficient to help justify a new pipeline to the orth, had faded away during 1999 and there presently seems no emaining promise of such possibilities. Similarly, the widely roclaimed signing of a memorandum of understanding between remier Lord of New Brunswick and Premier Bouchard of Quebec at dmundston in February of 2000 contemplating the proposed Cartier ipeline to run from Fredericton through western New Brunswick into uebec at Riviere du Loup, never became a reality. This expansion was ıtended to bring gas from Sable Island to eastern Quebec markets long the St. Lawrence River, but by 2002 the estimates for long term olumes from the Sable Island field had been sharply reduced, and the roposed Cartier project was abandoned.

The death of those two dreams for transmission pipelines to orthern New Brunswick also laid to rest many long term goals for GNB in that region of the province, and there are presently no signs on ıe horizon to suggest a revival of them. As a result, all current ssumptions for EGNB's future are based on its existence only in outhern New Brunswick serving the nine communities on its present ructure, and to eventually reach out to adjacent communities as emand and feasibility may allow. For example, Rothesay and uispamsis are two such targets, but there is presently no pre-committed emand that would justify the very high cost of such an expansion from GNB's present network at Saint John.

When EGNB was first organized there were five directors ppointed, three from Enbridge and two representing New Brunswick ıvestors. Since that time, Denis Losier of Assumption Life in Moncton ıd myself have been elected by our fellow investors as the two local irectors, while the representation from Enbridge in its Toronto office as changed from time to time, always involving well qualified and perienced people. By the time of EGNB's tenth anniversary in 2009, ıe group of local investors from New Brunswick had more than ipled, owning in the order of twenty per cent of EGNB's limited artnership units.

By that time a total of almost $400 million had been invested in the franchise, creating up to four hundred new jobs both directly and indirectly, and now serving more than ten thousand customers. The savings in energy costs over alternative fuels has been significant for virtually all customers converting to natural gas, and that total amount is now estimated at approximately $12.5 million annually. So EGNB has become an important company on the energy scene in New Brunswick, one that is consistently proving itself to be a good corporate citizen of the province.

Regrettably, however, not every EGNB customer has been satisfied with the savings being realized, and during 2010 a major public attack on both EGNB and Enbridge Inc. was launched by three large and disgruntled customers who feel that gas distribution rates are excessive and unjustified. They have chosen to ignore the rationale by which rates are set and approved by the Energy and Utilities Board, and have drawn comparisons from other jurisdictions which are not in context with the reality of gas distribution in New Brunswick. Through a long-running series of aggressive and derogatory newspapers ads, their attacks have had a demoralizing and damaging impact upon both EGNB customers and employees, and have placed a major demand upon EGNB management and its board of directors to respond in effective ways. In a single full-page ad published in early September, and repeated on a few subsequent occasions, both Denis Losier and myself as EGNB's two local New Brunswick directors have endeavoured to address the criticism under the emphatic heading "Proud to Speak for Enbridge Gas New Brunswick." While it is never possible to win a major public debate in this manner, at least I think we have accurately addressed the main issues and set the record straight.

Despite the challenges and obstacles that EGNB has faced over its first decade of operations, it has been a profitable investment for all those who have participated in its capital offerings since the franchise was won. Annual cash distributions on a quarterly basis have been consistent with the allowable regulated return originally granted by the Province of New Brunswick, and subsequently confirmed by the

Energy and Utilities Board. Regrettably, in late 2010 the EGNB board of directors decided as a measure of financial responsibility not to seek additional capital funds at this time, and to suspend quarterly cash distributions.

As a consequence of that decision, and with the spirit of respect and appreciation it has always displayed for local New Brunswick investors, Enbridge Inc. as controlling shareholder offered to repurchase any or all minority EGNB units at a price equivalent to the valuation which had been set formally by KPMG the previous year. In the light of suspended distribution payments and the fair and reasonable valuation of the offer, virtually all local investors decided to accept it. Full payment for all units was made by Enbridge shortly before Christmas in 2010, ending what has been for me and others one of the most rewarding investment experiences in which we have ever been involved.

These dramatic actions by Enbridge Inc. and EGNB – to cease the payment of cash distributions and reinvest all future earnings in the New Brunswick distribution franchise; and to provide the opportunity for local New Brunswick unitholders to retrieve their existing investments at fair value – speak strongly and clearly to the overwhelming character and integrity of the entire Enbridge organization. By these actions, Enbridge is confirming its commitment to the success of the gas distribution franchise over the long term, and also its appreciation and respect for the investment support which New Brunswickers provided as the franchise was originally pursued and developed through its early years.

I cannot speak highly enough about Enbridge. Of all the strategies that New Brunswick might pursue in its quest for a stronger economic future, there is none more profound in my view than to engage Enbridge and other companies like it as fully as possible in the affairs of our province. We should accord them home-grown status and encourage them to expand their enterprises here. In summary, I feel there are twin legacies of which all original Gas New

Brunswick investors can be especially proud – helping to bring natural gas to New Brunswick is one of them; bringing Enbridge to our province is the other!

Going forward, despite the fact that EGNB is now fully owned by Enbridge Inc., both Denis Losier and myself have been invited to continue our service as EGNB directors, which we have been pleased to accept. Looking back, the thirteen years during which I have been associated with EGNB have been among the most interesting and satisfying of my whole business career, an experience which did not even get started until I was almost at the age of retirement. For all local investors of the EGNB team, but perhaps especially for those original ones, I hold the utmost respect and admiration as entrepreneurial partners in a wonderful and successful business journey. I feel sure that when the long history of public utilities in New Brunswick is reviewed, say one hundred years from now, EGNB will have become as important to provincial affairs as NB Power and NB Tel have been through the last century. There is obviously great satisfaction to be taken by each one of us at having helped to make such a lasting contribution to the business history of this province.

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On the following page are the names of the twenty-nine original GasNB investors:

Original GasNB Investors – September 1999

Ed Barrett
Woodstock

Fred J. Beairsto
Fredericton

J.W. Bud Bird
Fredericton

Richard Boissonnault
Campbellton

Léandre Bourque[s]
Moncton

Sam Burgess
Fredericton

John T. Clark
Fredericton

Henry Comeau
Bathurst

Bernard Cyr
Moncton

Éloi Duguay
Edmundston

Gerald Hatt[s]
Sussex

W. James Hogan
Nepisiquit

*George Holmes**
Moncton

John Kileel
Fredericton

Gilles R. LeBlanc
Dieppe

Louis Leger[s]
Moncton

Gilbert Levesque
Grand Falls

Leonard Lockhart
Moncton

Ed MacDermaid
Bathurst

Doug R. MacDonald
Moncton

Greg Machum
New Maryland

Tony Mais
Fredericton

*Harrison McCain**
Florenceville

C. Allan McGathey
Fredericton

Richard H. Oland
Saint John

Ian Oliver
Bathurst

Kim D. Sharpe
Fredericton

C. William Stanley
Saint John

David J. Wilson
Fredericton

[s] These investments were shared.
** Deceased*

Chapter 12

Giving Back: Community Service

As I resumed my business career in late 1993, after having been defeated soundly at the polls just days before, my spirits were lifted by how much I seemed to be in demand for public involvement as a volunteer. There were several calls to help lead various fund-raising campaigns, or to join the boards of more than one charitable organization. There was a touch of irony reflected in these genuine requests and the enthusiastic attitude of intelligent and knowledgeable citizens who approached me, very sincerely believing that I was just the right man for the volunteer opportunities they had in mind. By contrast, in the recent months preceding the election and in my previous five years as their Member of Parliament, I had frequently experienced from a number of those same citizens a cool sense of cynicism and skepticism about my role as a politician. Much of this was of course related to the difficult issues during that time, such as free trade, the GST and the Meech Lake Accord, and at the end of the Mulroney era there seemed to be an attitude of general disrespect for almost any elected representative, especially a Conservative one.

Thus it was encouraging to be approached for a continued involvement in public service even though on a voluntary basis. It almost seemed that having removed the cloak of elected office, people were more than willing to accept me for myself and even eager to extol my virtues as they recruited me to their cause. In all likelihood those subtle changes in attitude and relationship between being an elected representative and a volunteer were more in my imagination than reality. I hope that is the case, because I continue to feel that the status of elected office should be one of honour and respect.

Among the proposals for volunteer service two stood out, and I worked at them simultaneously over the next few years. First, I was encouraged to become involved in economic development with the City of Fredericton, which I initially declined. After some very forceful insistence from my old friend the late Tom Crowther, publisher of *The Daily Gleaner*, ("You are the right man for the job, it is your duty"), I did agree to become leader of a new approach to economic development, not only for the City of Fredericton but in all of the surrounding areas of Greater Fredericton as well. Secondly, the Dean of Forestry at UNB, Ian Methven, asked me to become a part-time lecturer in forest policy legislation, which I declined; but as well he requested that I head up the creation of an advisory board for his faculty, which I accepted.

There was a feeling around City Hall, recognized both by senior city staff and by Tom Crowther, that some new energy and direction was required to organize and lead promotional efforts for economic development, particularly in the fast-growing technology sector where Fredericton already seemed to have a positive edge over other competing cities in the province. Although I was somewhat cautious about taking on more responsibility, (because of the first priority to rebuild my business career), at the same time I had retained my desire to continue playing a useful role in public service. I felt a sense of obligation that, notwithstanding the fact I had just been defeated as a Member of Parliament, there was still a worthwhile contribution I could and should make towards the overall good of the community. Frankly, I feel this is

an attitude that every citizen should have, and the more one ha benefited from life in their community the more they owe to it.

In that context, I decided to yield to Tom Crowther's persister encouragement and persuasion, and in mid-1994 became the voluntee chairman of Fredericton Economic Development Inc. where the initia terms of reference pertained only to the City of Fredericton and it immediate surroundings. It was not long, however, until I realized tha economic development cannot just be practiced within the specifi boundaries of a given city like Fredericton, but rather it is also ver important to take advantage of all the assets and opportunities existin in the towns and villages around the nearby area.

I felt there was the potential for great synergy, for example between CFB Gagetown in Oromocto and the retail merchandisin sector throughout the vicinity, not to mention the Fredericton airport between the two universities and the several high technolog practitioners in each locality; between the growing recreational facilitie within the city and the expanding population living outside its limits between the ambitious goals for tourism development by the city, an the unique cultural and vacation sites close to Fredericton such as King' Landing, Mactaquac Park, Grand Lake, the Miramichi River, the St. John River, and so on. It remains my feeling that all of the assets and values to be found in the whole central New Brunswick area around Fredericton need to be packaged and promoted as though it were a single Greate Fredericton community, and not merely as the city alone.

The first step was to persuade Fredericton's City Council that its economic development area should be expanded. I requested a meetin with Mayor Brad Woodside and the members of City Council, which was held in a committee session for which I had prepared the arguments as fully and persuasively as possible. The result was a consensus mandate to pursue a merger of Fredericton Economic Development Inc. with the Capital Region Development Commission. This was an important first step, and I was greatly encouraged that City Council saw the value of spreading the development effort broadly across the entire region, even

though the City itself was providing almost ninety per cent of the municipal funding for the process. This was large and visionary thinking by councillors, and it helped to set the tone for all subsequent presentations to the thirteen other municipalities.

The CRDC had existed for many years, comprising all of the communities around the city, and it included potential for the city's participation which Fredericton did not take advantage of very often. For a long time the leader of that organization had been Wayne Carnell, the Town Manager of Oromocto, so I next called on Wayne to raise the concept of a formal merger as had been approved in principle by the City Council of Fredericton. I explained my reasoning, pointing out that the city would have new resources to bring to the merger that would strengthen the CRDC, and the broad regional influence of all the surrounding communities would add significant substance to the marketing package available from the city.

It did not take Wayne long to agree with this concept, and I was flattered and encouraged by his willingness to step aside from the chairman's job of the CRDC and allow me to serve as chair of the new organization, which we proposed to call the Greater Fredericton Economic Development Corporation. We both recognized that this merger would have to appear to be something new, with a strong sense of ownership by the City of Fredericton. The perception that the city's representative be in the chair was an important one. As well, because there was some federal and provincial government funding potential, we needed to get the merger bound together with unanimous approval from every municipality participating in it.

Completing that merger became my job, so I met formally with every council beyond Fredericton and gained unanimous resolutions and signatories to the GFEDC incorporation documents. The criteria called for a representative to be on the GFEDC Board of Directors from each municipality, but with the provision that those directors could be interested citizens who were already active in economic development work through their own jobs or businesses, so that it would not merely

be a patchwork of elected councillors playing municipal politics. We finally pulled it all together, with Wayne Carnell offering great assistance and becoming vice-chairman of the board. An excellent number of candidates were appointed as the first directors, and we commenced a series of monthly GFEDC meetings that lasted for several years.

A great deal of enthusiastic and dedicated participation followed through the creation of "champion task forces," each one in key strategic areas of development activity such as information technology, engineering and consulting, transportation and tourism, to name a few, and a special task force to pursue the concept of a research and technology park in collaboration with UNB. One of our most important early decisions was to make a budget commitment to hire a full-time president and general manager to provide professional leadership for GFEDC in its day-to-day efforts and activities. During the summer of 1995 we were fortunate to recruit the services of Jacques Dubé, who was just completing a term as village manager in St. Andrews and had extensive previous experience as a regional representative for the Department of Municipal Affairs. A native of Bathurst, Jacques also had some private business experience in his early life, was well-educated and fully bilingual, and for several years thereafter he made an impressive contribution to our combined efforts for economic development in the Fredericton area.

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The ultimate endorsement of Jacques' service for GFEDC came in September of 2000 when Premier Bernard Lord singled him out to become Vice President of the New Brunswick Regional Development Corporation, or Business New Brunswick as it later became identified. After a couple of years in that role, he was recruited to be chief of staff for the Hon. Greg Thompson, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Regional Minister for New Brunswick in the Harper government, where Jacques served very well until September of 2009 when he was selected to become the new City Manager of Moncton. This is one of the premier public

service positions in our province, and I am confident that Jacques will serve in it successfully and well.

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The formal launching of the GFEDC occurred on Thursday, October 12, 1995, when an introductory gathering was convened to present our team of volunteers, along with official representatives from all municipalities, to provincial and federal government leaders and to the media. That was more than a full year since first volunteering my economic development efforts to the City of Fredericton, and it continued almost as a full-time commitment until June of 1998 when I moved to the role of chairman emeritus in order to help establish and nurture a succession process. I was followed as chairman by Richard McGuigan of MECCA Corporation, who proved to be an excellent candidate for the ensuing term, and he was then succeeded by Larry Armstrong, an engineer who had been a deputy minister for the province and was then affiliated with UNB. I was honoured with the appointment as chairman emeritus, which allowed me to continue my close involvement as an ex-officio member of the GFEDC executive, which I did until the Lord government (unwisely in my view) dissolved GFEDC into two separate rural and urban units in 2002. The successor to GFEDC became Enterprise Fredericton, which continues to be headed up by Doug Motty who had followed Jacques Dubé as general manager of GFEDC two years earlier.

I feel great satisfaction from my years in helping to get GFEDC started, and I continue to believe that the concept of regional economic development (i.e. the whole Greater Fredericton area) is a far more powerful approach with much greater potential for success than the manner in which the provincial government has now subdivided these efforts into separate rural and urban activities. There is a sense that municipalities these days want to have more direct responsibility and control of any promotional investments they are making, but I think it has been a mistake to not recognize that the whole scope of opportunity in the Greater Fredericton area is much greater than merely the sum of its parts.

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Following are the names of the founding directors of the Greater Fredericton Economic Development Corporation as at October 12, 1995:

Jim Appleton
Councillor
New Maryland

Anne Bertrand
Fredericton

John Bigger
Deputy Mayor
Fredericton Junction

J.W. Bud Bird
Chairman

Patrick Bird
Councillor
Fredericton

Prof. Barry Bisson
U.N.B.

Wayne Carnell
Vice Chairman

Frank Carroll
Mayor
McAdam

Robert Connors
Deputy Mayor
Nackawic

Richard Corey
Harvey

Murray Doherty
Chipman

Jacques Dubé
President and
General Manager

Gary Goulding
Mayor
Cambridge-Narrows

David Wayne Hartt
Tracy

David Hildebrand
Fredericton

Kevin Kilbride
Oromocto

Al MacDonald
Fredericton

Earle McNaughton
Councillor
Stanley

Nelson McRae
Councillor
Minto

Gregory A. Morton
Fredericton

Robert D. Neill
Fredericton

Dr. Daniel O'Brien
President
S.T.U.

Michael Quinn
Fredericton

Shawn Reid
Councillor
Millville

Victor Stewart
Gagetown

John Townsend
Fredericton

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One of the early areas of success for GFEDC was in information technology where Al MacDonald, then a principal of MCM Technology, was serving as the chair of that champion task force. He showed great leadership for the whole GFEDC organization by achieving some splendid results in quickly organizing the IT community in the Fredericton area, resulting in a technology trade show, followed by the first annual Texpo-NB professional conference on information technology, all during the middle weekend of October in 1995. These became annual events for several years in Fredericton, and were quickly replicated with similar competing initiatives in some other New Brunswick cities. It was great to enjoy that flattery of being copied by others, so the GFEDC team felt good not only from their efforts at the local level, but also by conveying an indirect contribution elsewhere in the province. In those middle years of the 1990's, information technology was recognized as one of the great opportunities for economic development, and the Fredericton area had quickly become a sort of cluster centre for this activity more than any other community in New Brunswick. There were high levels of enthusiasm, energy and innovation at work to enhance Fredericton's position and retain a major share of this new and rapidly developing sector of the provincial economy.

Driven by these opportunities, a small group of business people had already approached the GFEDC in early 1995 with the idea that we should find a way to create a research and technology business park in the Fredericton area as a means of helping to attract new companies to Fredericton who were in those fields of high technology. It had been clearly demonstrated in other centres throughout Canada and the USA, (such as at the famous Triangle Research Park in North Carolina, which is strategically situated between three major universities), that there is a contagious and clustering effect within the research and technology sector that builds upon itself. It seemed a compelling idea for us to approach UNB with a similar concept. As a first step, GFEDC had commissioned a professional study by Frank Flanagan, then in private practice and now the director of development services for the City of Fredericton, and his report identified the best potential site to be on UNB land adjacent to the existing Forestry Complex.

On March 5th and again on May 12th of 1995, I wrote lengthy letters to then UNB president Dr. Robin Armstrong describing the concept of the research and technology park, and proposing that the university consider playing a full part in the process, including a long term lease for a section of its valuable woodlot land as the site for the project. Supporting those submissions was a champion task force which GFEDC had appointed for this purpose, chaired by Barry Bisson who was himself a senior professor at UNB.

In the interval between those two letters, the City of Fredericton had been approached with a full scale presentation of Frank Flanagan's report and, to its great credit City Council quickly approved a commitment of $500,000 to service the land in question, when and if UNB governors were willing to make it available. This support from the city helped to strengthen the submission to UNB, and after a summer of extensive discussion and consideration, I received a letter dated October 25, 1995, from President Armstrong advising that UNB's Board of Governors had given approval in principle "for the leasing of suitable land of up to 26 acres in the present university woodlot to serve as the location for a new research and technology park."

This resolution was subject to a number of conditions, each of which were eventually resolved as the final land lease for the newly named Knowledge Park was negotiated and signed. Obtaining this response from UNB was an achievement of great promise, one that ignited another two years of diligent efforts in bringing all of the necessary affiliations together before the first building could be constructed. These not only included completion of formal documents with UNB, but also confirmation of financial support from the City of Fredericton, the Province of New Brunswick, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, NB Tel who provided the technology wiring backbone and the Bank of Montreal for mortgage financing.

In the spring of 1996 a public Request for Proposals was issued by GFEDC as part of a formal search for a lead developer to provide overall marketing and management services for the Knowledge Park,

and on July 5, 1996, Greenarm Corporation was selected for this role. Design and financing details for the first 30,000 square foot Knowledge Park building were completed over the following year, and on October 10, 1997, it was announced that Simpson Building Contractors of Fredericton would begin construction immediately. This was to be the basic investment in having physical facilities under construction and soon available for the first tenants from the research and technology sector to come our way. Our strategy contemplated that this investment process would continue with a second building once the first one had been fully leased.

The other key strategy was that each tenant would be specifically considered and pre-approved by UNB, on the basis of the research and technology elements that their tenancy would bring to the Knowledge Park. One of the stated criteria was "to build upon the world-class research capabilities of UNB by attracting companies with firm linkages to the university and the research community, or those with the potential for such linkages." While the Knowledge Park would be owned by the GFEDC – through a subsidiary company called Greater Fredericton Knowledge Park Inc. – at the end of the forty-year land lease, the buildings owned by GFEDC would transfer to ownership by UNB. It was envisioned as a public partnership, involving all three levels of government in one form or other, (including the GFEDC and the University of New Brunswick), pooling their resources to focus specifically on the research and technology sector. The hope was that the sector would be attracted to a unique location in Fredericton adjacent to UNB, one that would eventually become an integral part of the UNB institution itself.

One of the most important expressions of support for the Knowledge Park came to me in a letter dated May 1, 1997, from Premier Frank McKenna, in which he stated "we are supporting your project and will be presenting you with a proposal to make it a reality." This was an important and generous response, given the many communities that any Premier must serve, but it did not come easily or quickly. With the help of Dr. Russ King, who was then the local minister in the provincial

cabinet, we had worked hard to get serious government attention paid t the Knowledge Park file. On one vacation which Peggy and I took t North Carolina, I photographed many of the buildings in the famou Research Triangle Park and had them delivered to McKenna's office along with a strong plea for his interest and attention to the potentia which would exist for the Knowledge Park in Fredericton. Still, while w had his interest, we could not quite get a firm and favourable decision.

Early one morning in the spring of 1997, I met Frank or Woodstock Road. I was wearing my jogging clothes from the YMCA while he was taking his usual walk to the office, and I decided to stop him in his tracks and place the Knowledge Park issue firmly before him again. His response was, "Bud, there seem to be only two people who give one damn about the Knowledge Park in Fredericton, and it is you and Russ King!" I respectfully disagreed with him and once more urged his support, which was forthcoming shortly thereafter.

By the time we officially announced the opening of the Knowledge Park on June 17, 1998, Frank McKenna had retired as Premier, and Camille Thériault presided on behalf of the province. Everyone present that day will remember with great smiles a slip of the tongue by Premier Thériault, when he said "It is a real pleasure to be here to open Bud's Bird." He quickly corrected himself with a laugh, and the Knowledge Park was officially open and in fact already being developed.

In a period of almost ten years since then, the Knowledge Park has constructed three new buildings, each comprising approximately 30,000 square feet, to accommodate technology companies that meet the development criteria. So far, it has been a reasonable success in the sense that the Knowledge Park remains financially solvent, but there have been some close calls with prospects for major vacancies. On one occasion, some very good fortune occured when a large tenant appeared just in the nick of time to fill a large available space. In order to maintain financial viability once construction of a new building had been commenced, some tenants were accepted who did not fully meet all of the criteria for which the Knowledge Park was founded. I feel, however, this can be argued to

the present time as a legitimate sort of management flexibility in the important efforts to get a base for the Knowledge Park established.

It is now my understanding that the current Knowledge Park board is determined that all future prospective tenants for any new buildings must conform to the comprehensive criteria on which the original concept of the Knowledge Park was based. Otherwise, if it becomes merely another real estate project, then the publicly-sponsored Knowledge Park would be competing unfairly with private risk developers who are investing their own money. Research and technology substance is the key distinction for tenancy in the Knowledge Park; without that criteria there is no legitimate rationale for the existence of the Knowledge Park.

I must say that I have found it gratifying to see the Knowledge Park concept become a reality, but I also share disappointment that it has not attracted nearly so much new technology content to the Fredericton economic scene as we had first hoped and contemplated. Neither the original lead developer, Greenarm Corporation, nor the economic development forces of the provincial government have yet been able to find and attract many of the kinds of new high tech companies that would make a big difference for Fredericton. Admittedly, the top prospects are few and far between, and there is intense competition among many cities to sell them on locations, (for example, the new Research In Motion plant in Halifax a couple years ago). We simply must continue our best efforts, knowing we have much to offer at UNB and in the Fredericton area when the truly right opportunities come along.

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A major breakthrough has occurred in the growth of the Knowledge Park during 2010, with construction well under way on two new buildings to add to the three already established there. One of them does in fact arise from Research In Motion expansion, through its purchase of local Chalk Media and their decision to move its operations to the Knowledge Park.

The other addition will house the Centre of Excellence for Advanced Learning and Technologies, a new institution sponsored jointly by the provincial government, the federal government through ACOA and the National Research Council Institute for Information Technology. An early tenant will be CAE, a world leader in simulated training programs for aviation and other industries. With these developments, the Knowledge Park has reached a new stage of maturity in its role and location as a magnetic cluster for research and technology in New Brunswick.

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There has been a tremendous side benefit for UNB from the creation of the Knowledge Park, one that has been intangible and not generally acknowledged. For all of the university's existence the woodlot lands were held to be virtually a sacred trust on behalf of its faculty of forestry. The first intrusion on those lands took place in 1980 when, after complex negotiations between myself as Minister of Natural Resources and Jim Downey as President of UNB, the board of governors agreed to sell approximately 65 acres from the woodlot to the Province of New Brunswick for creation of the Forestry Complex as a national centre of excellence. As referenced in an earlier chapter, the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources transferred almost 2,000 acres of forest land near Noonan as partial payment for the Forestry Complex site, which was a major gain in the university's land ownership for forestry purposes.

When the second invasion of woodlot lands occurred with the development of the Knowledge Park, and with UNB facing the same severe financial requirements as most other universities, it was only natural that the compelling economic values of the woodlot lands within the city for development purposes could no longer be ignored. That potential has now become well recognized and is being fully exploited by UNB's property committee and its board of governors.

While the Knowledge Park has only slowly developed over the past decade, UNB has in much less time leased major portions of the woodlot for private new projects. Beginning with Home Depot, and

with Costco soon to follow, the woodlot lands have rapidly been brought to economic life. The initial Knowledge Park Drive, that was built by the city expressly for the Knowledge Park, has now been extended to join with Kimble Drive and Alison Boulevard through the eastern portion of the woodlot and major development opportunities, both commercial and residential, will be following shortly. As a modern institution, the university would have had to take advantage of the economic values of the woodlot lands sooner or later, but there is no doubt that the Forestry Complex and then the Knowledge Park were the catalysts for recognition and development of the financial returns now being realized from this segment of its forest land. Since virtually all of these property transactions including the Forestry Complex have been negotiated on a long term lease basis, (wisely so in my view), ownership will remain perpetually in UNB's hands and it will benefit indefinitely from the annual revenues being created as the land is developed. When I drive by the Forestry Complex and the Knowledge Park, which I understand have now been consolidated under single property management, I feel proud at having played a part in that constructive long term process of development for the benefit of both the community and the university. The values will accrue to Fredericton and to UNB for a very long time to come.

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Throughout my working life I have always been a bit mindful of the absence of a university education in my background. Thus I was more than pleasantly surprised, indeed elated, to receive a telephone call from Dr. Jim Downey in late summer of 1987, inviting me to receive an honorary degree from UNB at its Convocation that fall. Such a possibility had really never occurred to me, so it was with a true feeling of awe that I responded positively and enthusiastically to his request. This honour was a little hard for me to figure out, and somehow I suspect that my old friend and former advisor Fred Beairsto had quite a lot to do with nominating me for it. I certainly was not the typical profile of a candidate for an honorary degree, and over the years since then I suspect

that some at UNB may feel it was the worst investment in such an honou they had ever made. While I have continued to work in constructive way on behalf of UNB wherever the opportunity occurs to do so, and hav provided some modest annual financial support, certainly I have no become a major donor of the category often exemplified by honorar graduates. Despite this small sense of guilt, however, I have always fel honoured by the genuine respect and recognition received in my passin relationships with UNB staff and alumni ever since being awarded tha coveted degree. Here is an excerpt, courtesy of the UNB Archives, fron the citation prepared and read by University Orator, the late Dr. Donal F. Rowan. It has continued to be a motivation in my life since that time and of course I feel very proud to be an honorary graduate of th University of New Brunswick:

Citation: *CONVOCATION, OCTOBER, 1987*
JOHN WILLISTON BIRD to Be Doctor Of Laws

He entered provincial politics in 1978 as the MLA for Fredericton South and was immediately appointed Minister of Natural Resources where he played a leading role in the creation and implementation of New Brunswick's Crown Lands and Forests Act — now regarded as one of the best pieces of forest management legislation in Canada. This was, indeed, a major accomplishment which he cheerfully shares with Gordon Baskerville — now our own Dean of Forestry. This same energy and vision was the key to the realization of the Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre — about which another has written that "he picked up the cudgel when most others had tired of what appeared to be a lost cause." The Centre is of great importance to our City and our University, and it is clear that Bud Bird has long been a friend of UNB. Indeed, he has written that one of the best things about being Mayor of Fredericton was that it gave him a seat on the Board of Governors.

He has also written with engaging candour and honesty that "one of the worst omissions in my life was the poor judgment to forego a university education, and while circumstances of later years brought me into close contact with UNB, I have always regretted that I did not have a legitimate affiliation with the University."

It is our pleasant and rewarding task tonight to remedy that omission, and to make him a graduate of the "Class of 87." In doing so we honour him as a man of outstanding achievements and a close and constant friend of our University.

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Early in 1994, I was invited by the University of New Brunswick to convene a representative group of experienced individuals to serve as a new advisory board to the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management. This was a proposal advanced to me by then Dean of Forestry, Ian Methven, and was one that I found attractive because of my involvement as Minister of Natural Resources more than a decade earlier. I had retained a keen interest in New Brunswick's forests, and had always understood UNB's forestry program to have the best reputation for a program of its kind in Canada.

Our proposed goal was to sustain and enhance that reputation by helping to keep UNB at the forefront of forestry education in Canada. World competition was clearly driving a demand for better educated Canadians in forestry, as in all other fields, while the resources available to help universities meet this demand were growing ever more limited. Thus, with a need to use existing capabilities in imaginative and innovative ways, the creation of an advisory board to provide a specific faculty like forestry with experienced and objective counsel was deemed a goal worth pursuing.

I was fortunate to be able to contact and persuade a very listinguished group of people to be members of the new advisory board, ll of them with some knowledge of the forestry sector and most (but

not all) having graduated from UNB. Their mandate was to offer professional advice and support to the faculty through a process of two meetings each year, with an occasional conference call between sessions. This board was first convened in mid-year 1994, and continued for more than three years with Dean Methven and his senior faculty members participating fully. It was my role to act as chair of the group, which I enjoyed because of the interesting subject matter and the knowledgeable and professional calibre of the members of the advisory board.

While I feel sure that the dialogue and communications nurtured between the advisory board and the faculty during that time were highly beneficial towards the goals for which the board had been conceived, its ultimate contribution was a unanimous report presented to the President of UNB, Dr. Elizabeth Parr-Johnston, three years later. That submission contained a comprehensive business plan and proposal for a five-year pilot project within the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management which would give it greater managerial responsibility for its own teaching and academic goals, and also make it more accountable for its own financial, educational and research performance results. In essence, it was being suggested to UNB that an exploratory project be initiated that would make that faculty somewhat separate and independent from the university's normal consolidated management and financial structure, with a view to stimulating creativity and innovation through greater autonomy to that faculty in conducting its affairs and setting its directions.

This proposal had not been developed lightly by the advisory board. It represented more than a year of preliminary discussion, followed by the engagement of a professional consultant for a period of nine months to prepare the final report. Industry members on the advisory board raised well in excess of $50,000 to support the costs involved, and deliberations were extensive as draft after draft was examined towards the goal of reaching a unanimous conclusion among both the advisory board and the faculty with respect to the document and its recommendations. There was a strong and unified opinion that great innovation was required to help improve forestry faculty results and that, once explored through a pilot

project, the process of change might be similarly and beneficially applied to other faculties at UNB as well. The consultant who was engaged as executive-in-residence for this project was Fred Beairsto, who greatly impressed all concerned with his grasp of the issues and his diligence in preparing a very persuasive submission. Accompanied by Tom Hall (former CEO of Stora in Nova Scotia) who had helped direct this special project, and also by Dean Methven and myself, Fred made a presentation of the pilot project proposal to UNB's president and its two senior vice-presidents, Academic and Finance. That was on June 19, 1997, and it appeared to have been very well received. We were left with the feeling that we had made a meaningful contribution towards innovation in the forestry faculty at UNB, and that it would be given very serious consideration.

Almost two months later, in a letter dated August 12, 1997, Dr. Parr-Johnston advised that prior to presentation of our proposal she had decided to initiate the President's Advisory Task Force on University Renewal. In fact, Dean Ian Methven had agreed to chair that renewal task force. She advised, therefore, it had been determined that the pilot project proposal for forestry should not go forward for active consideration at that time. She felt that Dr. Methven would have the opportunity to introduce our thinking into the larger work of university renewal as it became appropriate to do so.

In effect, our advisory board work of many months had been pre-empted by a wider renewal study of the entire UNB establishment. Obviously this response was frustrating and discouraging, and particularly so given that Dean Methven appeared to have been involved in both initiatives at the same time. It remains a mystery to me that he did not advise one or both parties of the overlapping directions taking place. Shortly thereafter, I decided that I could not contribute more to the advisory board process, and resigned to allow myself more time for the several other activities that were then on my agenda. I still take satisfaction from the short life of that very capable advisory board. It seems to me unfortunate that UNB's administration was unwilling to explore and experiment with the business plan and pilot project we had offered. It would certainly have been an initiative worth conducting as

part of the larger university renewal study, and could not have come fro a more knowledgeable and experienced advisory board than the grou that served UNB for those three years between 1994 and 1997.

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Following are the members of the Advisory Board to the Faculty of Forestr and Environmental Management at UNB, 1994-97:

*I.D. Joe Bird**
Forestry Consultant
Huntsville, ON

J.W. Bud Bird
Chairman
Advisory Board
Fredericton, NB

*E.F. Ted Boswell**
President
E.B. Eddy
Ottawa, ON

George D. Bouchard
Deputy Minister,
Economic
Development
Fredericton, NB

Graham Farquharson
President
Strathcona Mineral
Services Ltd.
Toronto, ON

Paul Gagné
President
Avenor Inc.
Montreal, QC

**Deceased*

Greg S. Gillis
President
Washburn & Gillis
Fredericton, NB

Thomas R. Hall
President
Stora Forest
Port Hawksbury, NS

Mavis Hurley
Deputy Minister,
Natural Resources
Fredericton, NB

James K. Irving
President
J.D. Irving, Limited
Saint John, NB

R. Timothy Kenny
Vice President
Noranda Forest
Buckingham, QC

Ian R. Methven
Dean of Forestry
UNB
Fredericton, NB

Patricia M. Mohr
VP Economics
Bank of Nova Scotia
Toronto, ON

*J. Beverley O'Keefe**
President
Juniper Lumber
Juniper, NB

David Oxley
J.D. Irving, Limited
Saint John, NB

F.L.C. Les Reed
Forestry Consultant
Vancouver, BC

A. Tony Rotherham
Vice President
Canadian Pulp and
Paper Association
Montreal, QC

H. Hal Stanley
Secretary to Cabinet
St. John's, NL

Adam Zimmerman
Past Chairman
Noranda Forest Inc.
Toronto, ON

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It was not until my later years that I first became involved in any substantive way with aboriginal life in New Brunswick, (not counting my episode with the eagle feather at City Hall during the Oka confrontation). As a direct result of my role in salmon conservation and the MSA, I had the occasion to meet Chief Noah Augustine of the Metepenagiag First Nation at Red Bank in 2006, when I accompanied a delegation to talk with him about gill netting in the Northwest Miramichi River. For several years prior to that, his First Nation had shown great leadership by introducing the use of trap nets which catch salmon alive and permit the large ones to be released. That year, however, they had decided to return to the use of gill nets which kill every fish that becomes entangled in them; no escape, no chance for release. It was a drastic step backward in terms of salmon conservation, and I told him so in plain language. While he argued that his actions were necessary to obtain certain financial goals being pursued with the federal government, I responded by pointing out that he was holding the salmon *hostage* for reasons unrelated to conservation. He did not like my choice of words, and we did not part on very good terms.

Several months later in February of 2007, while the gill netting issue had remained unresolved, the regional director of DFO in Moncton, Jim Jones, suggested that Chief Augustine and I should meet for dinner with him to further discuss the subject. It was agreed that this meeting take place at the Delta Hotel in Fredericton, and it happened on Friday evening during which the city received the largest snowstorm of the winter. Thus the three of us were kept together by the weather over several hours, which resulted in a long discussion not just about salmon management, but even more so about economic challenges facing First nations. The approach taken to our meeting, as suggested by Jim Jones, was that Chief Noah and I should concentrate our thoughts and discussion on areas where we could agree to be helpful to one another, separately from salmon. He felt that this might then lead to a willingness to collaborate more closely on the conservation issue.

As I prepared for that dinner meeting I was determined to listen more closely than to talk, in hopes that I might find a bridge of common interest between us. Sure enough, I began to hear and realize more fully that many of the really big problems for Chief Augustine and most other First Nations are economic in nature. I came to appreciate that they might benefit from advice and counsel of a business nature in planning for ways to increase their revenues and find more jobs for their young people. The idea of creating some new avenues for open and frank dialogue between First Nations and the New Brunswick business sector became an interesting one between us that evening.

As we talked about these economic matters to the exclusion of salmon, I began to feel quite certain there was a real opportunity for members of the New Brunswick salmon fishing fraternity to help. Many anglers are also businessmen, and some could easily be recruited to offer business advice, or perhaps even consider employment or investment opportunities for First Nations throughout the province. When I raised this idea Chief Noah was enthused, and said he would be eager to attend any such gathering of business people to tell them more about the economic problems facing aboriginal communities in New Brunswick. As our hotel meeting ended, I made a commitment to convene such a gathering, and to do so within the coming month. In return, Chief Noah offered to host the group at his Metepenagiag Conference Centre in Red Bank. That event was quickly planned and took place early in April, less than two months later.

The business delegation consisted of about fifteen individuals from various companies and communities around the province whom I had contacted by telephone. Had it not been for the relatively short notice, and the fact it would require a full Saturday to attend and return, we could have almost doubled that number given the extent of interest and empathy expressed for the plight of our native people. This was one of the most revealing and refreshing signals I had received, that there truly seemed to be a desire among business people for more knowledge about First Nations in New Brunswick and a basic will to be helpful if

they could find ways to do so. There was also lots of frustration about perceived salmon fishing abuses, real or imagined, but an underlying sense of constructive goodwill prevailed. This positive attitude was confirmed and displayed during the first meeting at Metepenagiag, where we were well hosted by Chief Noah and several of his band members. There was a clear consensus that new and direct relationships between the business sector and the First Nations in our province should be pursued.

A similar meeting was held at the St. Mary's First Nation in Fredericton on June 2, 2007, with even more attendance by non-native business and professional people. By that time the news of our earlier discussion had spread among First Nations, so there was a good balance as well of aboriginal participants for the discussion about building relationships with the business sector. Over the lunch hour, a resolution was drafted to capture the consensus that appeared to be emerging from the talks, and when it was put to the audience for an ad hoc debate and vote, it passed unanimously. The First Nations and Business Liaison Group of New Brunswick was born.

Over subsequent months, a steering committee was convened comprising the chief of each of New Brunswick's fifteen First Nations and a corresponding number of business and professional representatives from the non-native community. The steering committee moved quickly and constructively and, by February 16, 2008 when another large forum was held at St. Mary's, incorporation documents had been prepared. Formal applications were made to both federal and provincial agencies for financial assistance to underwrite the costs and expenses for an executive director and his office. Subsequent commitments were received for a total of $120,000 over one year to get the organization started. An amount of $70,000 was repeated for a second year, but no further funding has yet been forthcoming. By mid-summer of 2010, our funding from both sources had expired and we were compelled for financial reasons to resort once more to a volunteer basis of operations, primarily an executive committee and my own office staff.

For the preceding eighteen months, however, we had been served by Gary Wood of Miramichi as our executive director. His mission was extensive: to follow up and help implement initiatives as they were encountered, and to generally maintain a working dialogue between the First Nations and the private business community; to help produce tangible economic results, modest though they may be in the beginning, in terms of employment and business development among New Brunswick's First Nations; to be part of a direct and transparent process with the business sector, hopefully also engaging provincial and federal government assistance where public programs are available to support such initiatives. In fact, through Gary's efforts and the work of our executive committee, the FNB Liaison Group became engaged in a formal memorandum of understanding with the two most prominent government agencies, namely the Joint Economic Development Initiative and the Aboriginal Workforce Development Initiative. We were invited to appoint directors to each one of their boards, and this has been done.

Regrettably, however, despite extensive efforts we were not successful in renewing government financial assistance in 2010, and there was no choice but to accept Gary Wood's offer of resignation. Graciously, he quickly volunteered to continue serving as a member of the FNB steering committee and so his important contribution to this cause will carry on. At almost the same time, in the summer of 2010, Chief Noah Augustine lost his bid for re-election at Metepenagiag by a very close margin, but felt obliged to resign as co-chair of the FNB Liaison Group, also graciously offering to continue serving as a volunteer member. The executive committee decided to approach Chief Jesse Simon of Elsipogtog First Nation at Big Cove, who had been an interested and active member of the Liaison Group, to seek his service as our new co-chair which he quickly agreed to accept. Thus, the FNB Liaison Group remains alive on a voluntary basis, offering a unique concept for improved dialogue and relationships between First Nations and the private business sector throughout New Brunswick. There appears to be some genuine enthusiasm for the concept, and it has been recommended as a model for other jurisdictions. How much in the way of tangible results can be

hieved remains to be seen, but clearly a new door has been opened in r province towards improved understanding and communication tween First Nations and the private business sector.

While the future of the FNB Liaison Group presently remains a le uncertain, business representatives on the steering committee do nain committed to the principles of helping nurture business activity d economic development among First Nations in New Brunswick, and : willing to continue doing so voluntarily. Among aboriginal presentatives, there is not quite the same sense of dedication because for ny Chiefs and councillors only immediate results count and there is t time nor motivation to pursue longer term concepts in the search for nomic solutions. However, there are some notable exceptions, one ng Chief Jesse Simon who has now replaced Noah Augustine as co-ir of the FNB Liaison Group. His leadership poses especially important tential because the one overwhelming opportunity for a major business cess story between aboriginals and the private sector exists at his own ipogtog First Nation which is near the village of Richibucto.

At that location, Imperial Manufacturing Group is a successful l growing manufacturer of sheet metal products, one that for many rs has found it necessary to search far and wide for qualified ployees to fill its production workforce. Yet, a very large population nemployed aboriginal people live at Elsipogtog only a few miles m Imperial's plants. The owner, Normand Caissie, has continually ered employment opportunities to native residents, but has had ually no success in attracting or keeping well qualified aboriginal ployees on his payroll. He has gone so far as to advance the prospect actually building a new plant for his sheet metal business at pogtog, where it could eventually become owned by the First Nation a lasting source of well paid employment for its people. So far, ortunately, there seems only passive interest in the pursuit of such a mising long term prospect.

Consequently, the executive committee of the FNB Liaison up has identified this combined opportunity between Imperial and

Elsipogtog as the most compelling challenge and the most feasible prospect that could possibly exist in New Brunswick for major economic development among aboriginal people. It has decided to concentrate all of its available volunteer FNB resources and ingenuity on this one single scenario to demonstrate that aboriginals and the private business sector, along with supplementary support from government agencies, can bring an awakening to this long sleeping golden dream. It is almost do or die, because if such an obvious potential cannot be realized then other more general prospects for the future would not look promising at all.

One major direction that must be pursued for the future of all First Nations is a proactive and continuing effort to make young native students aware of education and job opportunities in professional fields such as nursing, engineering and accounting, and in a variety of trade occupations such as trucking, energy and forestry. We can only imagine how good the results might become when the avenues of real collaboration between New Brunswick's business people and the First Nations of this province are kept open and alive, and when specific initiatives are supported by existing government programs at agencies such as JEDI and AWDI, and are followed through to constructive conclusions.

As to salmon conservation among some First Nations, the situation remains volatile by times. The use of gill nets was stopped entirely by Chief Augustine and his Metepenagiag First Nation in 2007, but these activities surfaced again in early 2008. As well, there have been intrusions on private fishing property in both 2007 and 2008 by natives from St. Mary's, which is a Maliseet First Nation having not traditionally fished the Miramichi River. While these specific salmon conservation issues will have to be addressed separately, and in more ways than one, it has been determined from the start that the FNB Liaison Group will not be merely a facade for addressing the fishing problems. Rather, it has been created in good faith to help First Nations and the business community in New Brunswick seek improved economic prosperity together. Hopefully from that relationship, other issues will get more

easily reconciled and resolved. That is the direction I have come to believe will work best in New Brunswick, and likely in other parts of our country as well. I look forward to continuing with both business and aboriginal colleagues in striving to make the liaison process an effective and practical economic concept in our province.

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There was a sad ending to a unique and too-brief friendship for me, and a tragedy for the aboriginal community in New Brunswick, when former Chief Noah Augustine of Metepenagiag at Red Bank was killed on Saturday evening, November 13, 2010, as the truck he was driving veered off the highway and struck a tree near his home. He was only thirty-nine years old, but in his young life Noah had emerged as perhaps the strongest aboriginal leader that New Brunswick has yet produced. He had great natural intelligence and personal capabilities, and a strong sense of vision and conviction that he could help bring better economic life to his community and to First Nations everywhere. He recognized that among the best ways to do so was to reach out beyond the First Nations themselves, and to join in the economic and business life of the whole community in our province and our country. That was why he was so attracted and dedicated to the concept of the First Nations and Business Liaison Group. Even though our tangible successes together in that forum were only minor and modest up to the time of his death, nevertheless he firmly believed that the expanding dialogue and relationships between First Nations and the non-aboriginal business community in New Brunswick was an important process moving in the right direction, and he shared great pride and passion in it. As an honour to his life, The Globe and Mail published a national full page obituary on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2010.

It was a motivating experience for me to work with Chief Noah over the relatively brief period of less than five years that I had known him, and feel that his death has been a great loss for all people in New Brunswick, not just aboriginals, but for every citizen who understands that the future of our province will be dependent upon contributions from so many different

segments of our society. As he recognized so clearly, for example, the aboriginal community will be our only internal source of population growth over coming decades, so much of our future workforce and leadership will be provided by our First Nations. Thus, there is a tremendous need for aboriginal leaders such as Noah Augustine to continue to emerge on our provincial scene more often than ever before.

My own role as co-chair of the FNB Liaison Group will likely end soon. I think the renewal of leadership is important, especially among those members of our steering committee who live in the Moncton area and who will be most closely involved with the Imperial and Elsipogtog project. However, I will continue to offer my volunteer efforts in these directions wherever possible, because I do believe strongly that the best way we can show our great respect for the legacy of Chief Noah Augustine will be to continue to work and find success at the vision of aboriginal economic development we shared together with him.

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For most of my life, the Fredericton YMCA has been a strong influence. In my high school days the executive director was a man named Johnny Vey, who was also coach of the high school rugby team. Although I could never make his teams, he was a man I learned to respect greatly for the strength of character he exemplified. By coincidence, he was the city's director of recreation during most of my term as Mayor. He had a very attractive daughter named Jackie, who became my first partner in dancing classes at the Y, where I demonstrated a lot more ability on the dance floor than I was able to do on the football field. Through the Vey family and the Y, I received some early positive direction that has served me well.

It was not until about 1962, just a short time after starting my own business and during the first year after construction of the present Y building on Saunders Street, that I joined the YMCA fitness club on a regular basis and I have been there ever since. In those days I had been concentrating entirely on business, not paying much attention to exercise

eating habits, when the notable Otis Logue said to me one day with eat disdain, "you must be living the good life too well, you're getting fully pussy looking!" What a terrible word coming from a man who is then the president of ADI, and one of my best customers. Anyone ıo knew Otis would understand that he really got my attention. It was e very next day that I started attending noon-day fitness classes in the iginal Neill Room at the Y, (in the absence of a gymnasium that was en yet to be constructed).

For the ensuing forty-eight years I have tried to make the Y ness centre my first call of the day. After experimenting with various ne periods, I long ago concluded that the best investment for my life o start the day with a vigorous workout. Everything seems to go better ım there. That has become a habit, and so for many years now I have en going through the Y doors around 6 a.m. every morning, missing workout only when away on business. Even in those cases, I visit ıer gym facilities when they are available.

When I was approached in early 2009 by Kathy Russell, the rrent CEO of the Fredericton Y, to provide some comment about her ıns for a brand new facility to replace the current one, now aging and coming rapidly inadequate to growing program requirements, my sponse was enthusiastic. There seemed to be a window of opportunity the midst of a worldwide recession to take advantage of government mulus initiatives, and I agreed to help pursue these directions in ıatever way I could. Thanks in large part to the assistance of my ıgtime friend and colleague, Jacques Dubé, (who was then the chief of ff for the Hon. Greg Thompson, regional minister in the federal vernment for New Brunswick), we were able to get some serious ention to the Fredericton Y's applications. We were fortunate as well have the Hon. Keith Ashfield and his staff following up on our file, and entually a $5.2 million stimulus grant was approved. During the same ıe, local MLA Rick Miles played a strong role for the Y at the provincial el, and a six-acre site (being the former Albert Street School property) s approved and donated by the government of New Brunswick to

become the superb central location for the new Y, within only short blocks from the combined campus of UNB and STU.

Earlier, under the stewardship of Kathy Russell and her predecessor Ed Fox, the local YMCA had saved more than $2 million from operations over preceding years, and almost another $1 million was approved by the Y's own Endowment Board. Very quickly, in only a matter of a few months, the feasibility of this $19 million project began to take shape, and ADI was commissioned to prepare plans and specifications for a construction schedule that would have the new building ready for opening in mid-2011, little more than two years from the time that the idea began to look realistic.

With a good deal of flattery and persuasion from Kathy Russell and Karina LeBlanc (then current president of the YMCA), I agreed to serve as honorary chair of the New Y Campaign. Quite quickly however, I was seized with an even stronger sense of purpose and excitement about the challenge, and offered to serve as co-chair of the campaign with Karina who brings her own sparkling vigour and intelligence to the project. Starting in early September of 2009, we moved smoothly and swiftly. Our original goals were to raise $1 million from City Council and $3 million from the community, and we assembled a very large group of volunteers to help, operating almost like a political campaign. The results by the end of 2009 were very encouraging, with more than one-third of the community goal specifically attained, and other general commitments in place that would bring it to the half-way mark. Unfortunately, the City Council response was only one-quarter of our request, so there remained a great deal of work before us to fill that gap. We became a strong campaign team, and have successfully engaged the whole community under the all-embracing theme of *Your New Y!*

A major catalyst from the start was a large lead gift from the family of John Clark, Sr., a lifelong champion of the Y and very successful automobile dealer. With support from his brother Richard and cousin David Wilson, I called on John at his home in mid-September of 2009. With little hesitation, after considering our presentation, John called to

tell me that he would make an immediate commitment for $300,000, and a secondary incentive pledge for $100,000 more, providing we attained our $3 million goal. This proved to set the tone and the spirit of the campaign, and we quickly commenced to make significant progress in obtaining many donations large and small. We had decided from the start to make the campaign as short as possible, no longer than nine months to June 30, 2010, and by that time we had already exceeded our $3 million original goal and had earned the incentive from the John Clark family.

Our volunteers were dedicated and committed themselves, because in every case a personal pledge was a precondition of joining the campaign team. That way, there was no hesitation whatsoever in seeking financial support from other people. By early 2010, when the campaign was at its peak, there were almost two hundred people actively and intensely involved. There are many other names that should be mentioned for outstanding efforts and achievements, but I dare not risk the omission of a single one of so many who are deserving. Suffice it to say, every volunteer and every donor to Your New Y will be permanently honoured by name within the walls and halls of the new facilities.

The drive and the diligence of our campaign team was especially well illustrated late in 2010 when we learned that cost overruns for the last and main phase of the construction program were going to require increased funding. By the time that news arrived, we had already obtained financial commitments to our community campaign that totalled almost $4 million, not including the City Council donation. Thus we had exceeded our original goal by one-third, and our campaign was supposed to be over almost six months earlier. So it took a deep breath to ask our campaign executive for an extra and continuing effort towards a new final goal of $5 million, which would include the City's original contribution and hopefully some more. As expected, there was a strong and positive response to this new challenge, and twenty-five of our key volunteers agreed to become "the Peak Team" with a resolve to raise almost $750,000 more than had been achieved at the time of the request. By Christmas of 2010 we added another $250,000 to our total,

and there now remains a half-million dollars to be pursued during the first quarter of 2011, as the printing of this story is being completed.

I have been fortunate to be involved in many great campaigns during the course of my career. Two that come to mind are the run for the Mayor's office in 1968-69 and the entrepreneurial investment drive for Gas NB in 1997-99, but this YMCA campaign is a similar one I would never have wanted to miss. It has not only been stimulating and enjoyable, but I still feel the same energy and drive as in those previous experiences. It is great to be around so many capable and enthusiastic people, and to be pursuing a common cause that is so worthwhile. We have achieved wonderful results due entirely to the combined efforts of a great many dedicated volunteers.

The YMCA has a wonderful name and reputation, a great *brand* we like to say, with no enemies and few competitors. Consequently, we have been well received wherever we have gone to seek support, even from those who were unwilling or unable because of other priorities. It really is inspiring to know that we are working to create an important asset, one that will help serve and build Greater Fredericton for the next one hundred years. It will prove a legacy to last for every one of us.

Chapter 13

The Salmon: A Lifetime Cause

For most of my adult life, ever since being first introduced to the thrill of hooking an Atlantic salmon on a fly rod (when fishing with my old friend and second father, Al Anslow, on the Upsalquitch in 1952), I have been strongly attracted to this wonderful wild resource, which long ago was so plentiful in most New Brunswick rivers. Through good fortune and circumstance later in my life, I have had opportunities to become deeply involved in salmon conservation and salmon politics, and these remain high priorities for me to this present day. I have always felt that the mission is more than just about salmon and salmon fishing, although I am fascinated by this great fish and love the time and effort that both Peggy and I put into angling for it each season. We have had good luck and bad, but we are both in harmony with the classic notion that the salmon *fishing* is always great, even if sometimes the salmon *catching* is not so good.

In many respects the cause of preserving the Atlantic salmon has become a way of life, and one of the ways for me to perhaps make a small

contribution to a better world. So I have tried to devote a good deal of both my spare and working time over recent years, and considerable office and travel expense as well, to conservation activities that will hopefully help to ensure the salmon's survival. I still harbour the hope that we may be able to bring it back eventually to the large runs in New Brunswick rivers that existed so many decades ago. Even now in 2010, however, we seem to be bravely fighting a still difficult battle.

My more serious involvement in conservation started when I became Minister of Natural Resources for New Brunswick in 1978. Having been a salmon angler for several years before that time, I already had some concerns about the long term stability of the resource and the way it was being managed. During my tenure, we were able to put in place some important measures that have had a lasting and beneficial impact upon conservation of wild Atlantic salmon: notably, introduction of the harvest tag and regulations for live release of all large salmon. Also while Minister of Natural Resources, I had several occasions to speak at and participate in activities of the Atlantic Salmon Federation. When I decided to return to private life in the summer of 1982, I was invited to become a special advisor to the late Dr. Wilfred Carter, then the president of ASF, and also was appointed to its boards of directors in both Canada and the USA. This was an opportunity to remain actively involved in salmon conservation, and I especially enjoyed working closely with Wilf Carter whom I had originally met many years earlier in Gaspe. We had become good friends over the years, and I have long admired the impressive contributions he made through his own life's work to protect and preserve this great fish.

One of the most significant projects in which I assisted Wilf was devising a structure to improve communications and the coordination of conservation activities between the Atlantic Salmon Federation and its several regional councils across the Atlantic Provinces and New England. After considerable planning and dialogue, a working conference was organized in August of 1987, to be held in the school at Matapedia, Quebec, just across the New Brunswick border and at the juncture of the

Restigouche and Matapedia Rivers. The meeting was comprised of representatives from each council, with Wilf Carter and myself participating on behalf of the ASF head office and its board of directors. An extensive document was drafted and debated, then unanimously approved, to become known within ASF circles as the famous (some would call it infamous) Matapedia Accord. That was a memorable and satisfying occasion, and the organization that was then established remains in existence and is effective to this day.

During this relationship with ASF in the mid-1980's, I was flattered at a proposition advanced by Wilf and supported by then ASF co-chairs Lucien Rolland and the late Joe Cullman, (both senior corporate leaders in their respective countries), for me to become the next ASF president. Wilf intended to retire within a few years, and I took it as a genuine compliment to be considered capable of following in his footsteps. The opportunity presented itself in early 1988, when he did finally announce his retirement plans to take effect that year-end. I had been giving the matter very serious consideration, and it was an attractive and tempting new direction. In the end, however, with my business life always filled with a variety of interesting demands and prospects, and with my political mind still keenly interested in some future chance to run for the Premier's office, I decided to decline ASF's generous proposal. This decision was conveyed by letter on March 25, 1988, and was met with disappointment, yet also with understanding by my ASF friends.

A process of recruitment was then initiated, which resulted in David Clark, a Fredericton lawyer and former Attorney General of New Brunswick, engaged as ASF's new president late in 1988. A few years later a change was again deemed necessary, and Bill Taylor was selected for the job. He had been Wilf's executive assistant for a relatively short time, but showed a great promise which has been more than fulfilled. He assumed the ASF leadership with a strong sense of career commitment to it, large responsibilities which he has held and discharged extremely well to the present day.

My own involvement with ASF continued as a director, and as o-chair of the Research and Environment Committee. I have always ppreciated the opportunity to serve in the ASF organization, and one of ıy favourite mementos is a letter from Wilf Carter in August of 1987 in /hich he expressed his gratitude for my assistance in successfully ompleting the Matapedia Accord. It was an enduring and very fulfilling elationship until his death in March of 2009, and I was honoured to be ıvited by Pauline Carter to deliver his eulogy. Here are a few of the /ords I used to pay tribute to Wilf's lifetime dedication to Atlantic almon conservation:

"As a consequence of his character, Wilf Carter was the perfect ıan to engage the many diverse groups of individuals, institutions and ircumstances he would encounter as slowly and steadily he developed ıe salmon conservation network that has become such a powerful force ı our world today. All in one package, he was the ideal leader - a isionary, an organizer, an advocate, a diplomat and always a strong ghter for the calling to which he was committed. Possessing great gifts ɔr building relationships, Wilf's truly gigantic contribution to salmon onservation was the manner in which he mobilized the entire salmon 'orld in a focused and compelling direction toward conservation."

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In 1988 when I was elected as a Member of Parliament, I became ıvolved in the Parliamentary Fisheries Committee, and continued to eep in close touch with Atlantic salmon conservation activities. I was ble to exert some influence on the salmon conservation file at DFO :deral levels, which I feel eventually may have helped in the decision by ıy caucus colleague, Honorable John Crosbie, Minister of Fisheries and)ceans, to close all commercial salmon fisheries in Newfoundland and abrador in 1992. That was a much needed political decision, and a ɔurageous one because it affected his own riding and province directly.

Seven years earlier his predecessor, the Honorable Romeo eBlanc, closed the commercial fishery in the Bay of Chaleur and

elsewhere throughout the Maritime Provinces. That was also an historic conservation achievement, due largely to the public pressure by then president of the Miramichi Salmon Association, the late Jack T.H. Fenety, who had made it almost his life mission to stop net fishing in the Miramichi and the ocean areas into which it flowed.

Those two closings of commercial fishing for Atlantic salmon in eastern Canada are likely the most pivotal conservation events that have yet occurred in the long fight to save North American stocks of this great fish. While the dividends from those decisions were not immediate in terms of greatly increased numbers in our rivers, they did allow a higher percentage of large salmon to get through to spawning beds. Consequently, juvenile stocks in most rivers have become relatively stable and sustainable. Unfortunately, the basic problem of mortality at sea has yet to be discovered and solved, but scientific efforts such as the SALSEA project remain intense and encouraging.

I was truly flattered during 1995, almost two years after my return from Parliament to private life, that it was Jack Fenety who approached me, along with MSA Directors Dave Dickson and David Hashey, to ask if I would consider serving as the next president of the Miramichi Salmon Association. After thirty-seven years at the MSA helm, Jack had decided to retire from his volunteer leadership position. Quite quickly it became apparent to me that this could be an opportunity to become more deeply involved in salmon conservation in a leading role, yet on a volunteer basis that would not unduly interfere with my business responsibilities. I agreed to meet with MSA directors at their annual meeting in Boston in early 1996, where I received and accepted a unanimous invitation to become president. It was a gratifying session that left me highly motivated to take on the job and to strive to do it well.

This was a special challenge, in addition to my continuing ASF involvement, because it was all about the best known Atlantic salmon river in the world, the Miramichi, where the whole conservation mission was becoming more critically focused every year. The downside was that it would involve a lot of time and I still had to make a living, with Bird

Holdings Ltd. as my main working priority. The other risk to the MSA role was that Jack Fenety and I might not get along well in the transition, being two fairly similar and stubborn personalities, both of us with a lot of pride and determination. The cause was close to my heart, however, and involved the river and the fish I prized the most, so I was more than pleased to accept the mandate.

As it turned out, I think my MSA tenure has been a wonderful experience for me and a renewed boost for our conservation mission. Both Jack and I made the right start by agreeing to have Judge Dave Dickson as our friendly mediator during the transition process, and in his usual skilled and good-humoured fashion he was able to guide us when controversial issues arose. I well remember a pivotal Sunday morning meeting the three of us had in the BHL boardroom to discuss a number of issues, most of which involved new directions that I felt were going to be necessary to take, many of them not favoured by Jack and some openly resisted by him.

To his great credit, and with encouragement from Dave Dickson, there was slowly a realization by Jack that this new leader of his beloved MSA was going to need a pretty free rein to fulfill the responsibilities he had been given. From that point forward, right to the day of his passing more than a decade later, Jack Fenety was my closest ally and strongest supporter in MSA affairs. He actually conveyed great pride in the renewed development and conservation influence that the MSA was able to accomplish over those intervening years.

It was a distinct honour and privilege for me to be asked by Jack's family to deliver the eulogy at his funeral in the summer of 2007. This is part of what I said:

"While Jack Fenety loved the Atlantic salmon and all the great rivers in which it spawns, especially the Miramichi, and devoted a large part of his life to the conservation of those specific resources, I believe his purpose was larger than that – the salmon and the river were the instruments he chose to address all the wonders of nature, the mysteries

of creation and the cycles of everlasting change. He was truly concerned about the dangers which the presence of man brings to the natural process of our entire environment, and so his determined efforts as a salmon conservationist were among his greatest contributions to leaving the world a better place than he found it."

Recognizing that I could not deliver the tremendous individual commitment that Jack Fenety had offered for almost four decades certainly not with all of my other responsibilities, it was decided from the beginning of my MSA tenure to start building a small permanent staff and to somehow find the money and the volunteer services to support it. The first step was to find a full-time secretary to follow on the part-time work of Wilma Spencer, who had been doing that job extremely well for Jack over a very long time. She was pleased to consider retirement, but she did help a great deal to get me started.

We advertised for secretarial applications and received several replies, with two of them standing out above all others, Jo-Anne Briggs (now married to George Linton) and Angela Carver. That was the beginning of a long and successful association and close friendship with these two fine individuals, which has now lasted in both cases going on fifteen years. These two women obviously have their own ways, but both are dedicated, competent and hardworking. In my own frequently demanding agendas, I have always been able to keep them fully occupied and they have never let me down.

As it has turned out, Jo-Anne is now employed as office/fund-raising manager by the Miramichi Salmon Association, and Angela is my secretary/assistant at Bird Holdings Ltd. It was agreed at the beginning their roles would be cooperative, however, and the process has turned out very successfully. At this time of writing, both women are still with the MSA and BHL on a full-time basis, and still performing all of the tasks that need to be accomplished despite the pressures which so frequently are placed upon them. The best people always seem to get the job done, and both Jo-Anne and Angela have earned great respect for their first class performance.

From that start in 1996, with Jo-Anne the MSA's first permanent nployee, and with its head office then established in premises donated ' BHL in Fredericton, the organization has developed to the point that e Miramichi River is probably the best managed Atlantic salmon atershed anywhere. The foundation for this success has been cruitment of a large and active board made up of more than fifty rectors from both Canada and the USA, along with a sustained annual embership of almost one thousand Miramichi anglers, guides and itfitters. Key among many fund-raising activities, these groups conduct rge conservation dinners each year at five locations throughout New unswick and one each winter in Boston.

The progress and growth which the Miramichi Salmon ssociation has achieved over the past fifteen years has been based on dividual contributions of time, effort and money by its many directors, ho have taken a serious interest in and accepted responsibility for elping to manage and advance its affairs. It has become a dynamic *ternational* force for conservation, springing directly from people, milies and groups who share a deep bond with the Atlantic salmon and e famous Miramichi River.

Perhaps my primary goal after taking on the MSA sponsibilities from Jack Fenety was to make it a stable organization at could operate consistently with its own small staff. We were dealing ith one of the best and largest salmon rivers in the world, and the nservation issues were far too serious to be left only to part-time aders and volunteers. I set out to not only enlarge the MSA board of rectors, but also to increase the size and stability of our charitable come flow so as to fund full-time professional conservation anagement to lead the organization, both at the desk and on the river.

We had immediate success in adding new directors, because many od people were enthusiastic about conservation and eager to become volved. A program for life membership had been introduced, originally tended to promote larger one-time donations. We worked diligently, owever, to change the tone of that program from merely lifetime membership to *lifetime commitment*, and so were able to nurture a steady stream of annual donations from a growing number of life members. Within the MSA, it has now almost become a conservation status symbol to be a life member, and those ranks are growing every year.

We concentrated on improving our annual conservation dinners as fund-raisers, continuing the original model for the MSA that had been established in Boston many years earlier. In fact, there is a separate MSA corporate entity there that raises all US contributions for the MSA, and forwards the funding to support our conservation requirements as they arise. For many years throughout Jack Fenety's tenure, that Boston dinner had been the largest single source of MSA financial support, and has always emphasized the international character of the salmon fishing community on the Miramichi.

The first such conservation dinner in New Brunswick occurred in 1996 in honour of Jack Fenety's retirement, and with a strong organizational team it turned out to be a major fund-raising success. Over subsequent years that Fredericton dinner team has remained together and been expanded, so that it is now virtually an MSA affiliate group of its own. Over fifteen years, those Fredericton dinners have now raised a total of more than $900,000 in support of MSA activities. In fact, the 2010 event surpassed $100,000 in net returns for the first time in MSA history. Naturally, the success of the Fredericton dinners has led to an expansion of these activities in other locations such as Saint John, Moncton, Woodstock and Miramichi, with a future event for Halifax still on our radar screen. The process has been successful and growing slowly each year. A supplementary value to the organization of these dinners goes beyond the money that is raised, because it provides an opportunity for many volunteers to work actively in support of conservation. I think one of the great strengths of the MSA family is the spirit of common cause and cooperation that has been engendered through such frequent projects and resulting good communications.

The key opportunity to find permanent professional leadership came in 1997, when the federal government through DFO announced

that it would be closing its federal fish hatchery at Miramichi. This was the oldest continually operating hatchery in Canada, and in my opinion was an important symbol of Atlantic salmon conservation on the Miramichi. It seemed unthinkable to have it close down, so we began negotiations with DFO to take over its operations. As so happened, the manager of that hatchery was Mark Hambrook, a native of Renous on the Miramichi and a biologist who was devoted both to the river and its Atlantic salmon resource. He was so eager to see the hatchery saved that he actually volunteered to invest both his career and his own money in the future operation of it. We met together and drafted an agreement that I then took to the MSA board of directors for approval. It consisted of both a financial and employment partnership with Mark, and a proposal for him and the MSA to acquire ownership of the hatchery together from DFO. That facility would remain a symbol of Atlantic salmon conservation on the Miramichi, and also would become the home of the Miramichi Salmon Association.

To put it mildly, many of our MSA directors thought I had lost my mind, and they felt the planned arrangement would lead us to financial ruin even though Mark had conceived a rational plan to raise and sell brook trout at the hatchery as a way of helping to pay for salmon conservation. After some lively debate, approval of the MSA board was obtained and the hatchery was acquired from DFO. To promote total community support for the new hatchery, it was decided to rename it *The Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre*, and ownership was actually vested in the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee. The Miramichi Salmon Association retained the responsibility to manage and finance its operations under the direction of Mark Hambrook as MSA general manager. This marked the maturing of the MSA as a stable and self-sufficient organization, and it has grown both in capacity and capability from there.

Under Mark's leadership the hatchery operations have been preserved successfully, and in fact a major renovation and expansion project was carried out with ACOA financing that has resulted in

increased production and research capacity, as well as new administrative facilities. Federal and provincial levels of government have both been helpful to the success of the hatchery in innovative ways, with DFO actually becoming a tenant for office space in the new administrative building, and NBDNR becoming a major customer for brook trout production from the hatchery. This latter contract has uniquely fulfilled our original concept, the idea of raising and selling trout as a means of financing salmon conservation. Indeed, the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre has now become a great success story, demonstrating how a determined and dedicated group of volunteers through the MSA can make a very real and tangible contribution to the preservation and enhancement of our environmental resources.

The work and the momentum of the MSA has continued to flourish. After the hatchery acquisition was completed Mark Hambrook was appointed president, and my volunteer role became chairman of the board of directors. It was decided to repurchase Mark's share of the hatchery ownership because it was not really a good business investment for him, but there is lasting recognition and respect for his past willingness to stake personal funds in making the original deal possible. His support will long be remembered by me and by others with deep appreciation.

In 2006 a second biologist was engaged in the person of Jenny Reid, and the MSA now provides continuing research, monitoring, restoration, production and management services that are the envy of salmon rivers elsewhere in the world. Working closely with International Paper and the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the MSA has helped to pioneer smolt inventory studies within the Miramichi River, and also supports the ASF program for sonic tracking of smolts and kelts from the Miramichi watershed to the ocean. These tracking studies have proven to be pivotal scientific initiatives in the larger search for causes and solutions to the salmon's mysterious mortality at sea.

Consequently the MSA, serving the whole Miramichi watershed, has become the largest and most effective single river-based conservation

force in the salmon world, with a combined and balanced budget approaching $1 million annually. There is no other one group that consistently provides such care and attention to a major salmon river as the MSA contributes to the Miramichi. I am very proud to have played a part in building that organization.

When taking on the presidency of the MSA back in 1996, I was then and still remain a director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Surprisingly, the Miramichi Salmon Association was not a formal affiliate of the ASF at that time, having years earlier withdrawn its membership over a dispute about the formation of the New Brunswick Salmon Council. At first I tried hard to sell Bill Taylor, president of the ASF, on the idea of making the MSA a special regional council of the ASF so that it would have its own unique role in that organization. To some extent this was done with tongue-in-cheek, because I realized what a difficult position that would be for ASF with its other existing councils, and I was not surprised when my proposal was turned down. In the course of discussing such possibilities, a good relationship was established with Bill Taylor and the chairs of ASF at that time, John Houghton in Canada and Donal O'Brien in the USA. It was not very long before I was invited to become a member of ASF's Regional Council Committee and eventually co-chair of the Research and Environment Committee, a position from which I retired in November of 2008. My role in the MSA in 2010 is as chairman emeritus, an honour bestowed when Carl Ash succeeded me as the active chairman in 2002. The many years I have spent in helping MSA and ASF to advance the cause of wild Atlantic salmon conservation have been among the most fulfilling and satisfying times of my life.

Another salmon conservation opportunity was still to come, however, and in 2005 I was appointed as a Commissioner for Canada to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, which has its head office in Edinburgh, Scotland. It is much like a United Nations forum among all of the salmon-producing countries of the North Atlantic, where formal collaboration takes place for purposes of preserving and enhancing

wild Atlantic salmon stocks in every jurisdiction. NASCO's work includes formal accords to prevent overfishing in the high seas beyond sovereign zones; to monitor the state of salmon stocks in all areas of the ocean; and to coordinate combined scientific efforts in the search for solutions to declining stocks and salmon mortality at sea.

My initial appointment came from the Paul Martin government, recommended by the late Jack Fenety and supported at the time by local Member of Parliament, Hon. Andy Scott. It was renewed in 2007 and again in 2009 by the Stephen Harper government, supported by Hon. Greg Thompson. This has been a real opportunity for me to have an influence on Atlantic salmon conservation at the international level, and I have tried to play a strong role in developing support for NASCO in North America.

There is simply no question that the Atlantic salmon resource is in a long term declining trend. For more than thirty-five consecutive years, maiden runs of Atlantic salmon returning to North America, and also to Europe, have consistently declined in numbers without any reliable indicators of the causes. While many healthy and well-managed rivers like the Miramichi have continued to produce abundant smolt populations, the returns have been only dismal fractions of what should be reasonably expected.

In 1975, it was estimated by the International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES) that in excess of 900,000 multi-sea-winter salmon, having spent two years or more in the ocean, were returning to North American rivers. Yet, during the most recent decade those numbers have averaged barely 100,000 per year, and sometimes fewer than that. In my view, this is the most alarming statistic of all. There is good evidence that our rivers continue to be managed well, and scientific studies confirm the good numbers of smolt going to the ocean each year. *The mystery grows about their mortality at sea, and unless we solve that mystery the very existence of the Atlantic salmon resource is in peril.*

Thus, over the past few years it has become the mission of many people to work with NASCO in advancing their critical five-year

SALSEA research program. This project is designed to bring all the salmon-producing countries of the North Atlantic together in a major consolidated research effort to learn more about the salmon's life at sea, and hopefully to discover both reasons for and solutions to its ocean mortality.

I have strongly promoted Canada's participation in SALSEA, and in fact was appointed as an advocate for the program in 2007 by the Hon. Loyola Hearn, then Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. In that capacity, I have maintained a steady dialogue with officials in his department, and have even been able to bring SALSEA to the passing attention of the Prime Minister's Office. The main goal was to have Canada provide a scientific research vessel for the SALSEA cruises required in the Northwest Atlantic in 2008 and 2009, and it is encouraging that Canada has agreed to give such significant leadership and more to the SALSEA program. In addition to an early supporting grant of $100,000 in 2007, DFO did provide ship time in August of 2008 and again in 2009 for scientists to collect data on salmon-at-sea mortality. The cost for these commitments is large, in the first year alone totalling approximately $500,000 for ship time and another $300,000 for associated personnel, equipment and logistics. A great deal of credit is due to scientist Gérald Chaput at DFO's Moncton office, who helped prepare the original plan and coordinated both cruises.

I find the SALSEA project to be inspiring. Not only are we pursuing the mystery of the salmon's decline, but knowledge could also be forthcoming about the changing nature of the ocean's waters and of the climates that arise from them. Many scientists believe that, because of its migratory nature in the upper pelagic level of the water column, the Atlantic salmon can be reliably studied almost as the "canary of the ocean," providing broad information about its own existence and also about other species which travel in these same waters.

Involvement in wild salmon conservation for so much of my life has proven to be among the most rewarding and fulfilling of all my experiences. As I have tried to say in speeches and essays over the years,

the Atlantic salmon world has given me a unique opportunity and a worthwhile purpose to help in some small way to leave our planet a better place than I found it. Also of course, many of my good friends come from salmon fishing and conservation activities, and so I look forward with hope and optimism to a significant 'salmon influence' in my life until the end of my days. I know the same goes for my wife and fishing partner Peggy, as we both love the Atlantic salmon and its rivers and feel that we have done our level best to help support and advance their cause.

The lore of Atlantic salmon in our lives has not just been about conservation because it all started with the plain joy of just going fishing. We have spent time in renowned and magical waters, primarily in New Brunswick, but also Labrador and other places; we have shared wonderful times with lifelong friends, many of whom are now departed; we have travelled to camps and lodges which all have their own unique traditions, culture and history; we have enjoyed exciting realities of that silver salmon striking at the fly; perhaps most of all, we have come to know how good it is to be alive in this wonderful world.

The love for the great outdoors, for forests and rivers and hills and skies, has been and remains a key defining element of my life. That bond with nature has been nurtured consistently over time with twenty-five consecutive hunting seasons at Craven's Gulch on the Upsalquitch, followed by twenty-five more years at Slate Island on the Miramichi, (with excellent head guides John Spencer, and before him Vince Munn). Interspersed throughout that all that time were countless memorable places and their managers, like Frasers Lodge (Don Sullivan) on the Kedgwick; Runnymede (Lorne Irvine) and Larry's Gulch (Jim MacDonald) on the Restigouche; Two Brooks Lodge (Lee Marshall) on the Upsalquitch; the Ristigouche Salmon Club (Al Carter); the Eagle River and Michael's River (Bill Bennett) in Labrador; and throughout the Miramichi at famous spots like Camp Adam, Dam Camp (Vivian Harris), Mountain Channel (Wes Curtis), Black Brook (Gayden Curtis), the Ledges Inn (Derek Munn), Rocky Brook (Manley Price), Burnt Hill (Merlin and Leslie Palmer), Rocky Bend, Square Forks, Big Hole Lodge

and, of course, the Clayton Stewart Half Moon canoe trips with legendary guides such as Vince Swazey, Cecil Davis and Harley Stewart.

Parallelling my time at Slate Island has been a founding membership with a dozen good friends at Kenmore Lodge, where the ashes and memory of Kenmore's leader, Punchy Walker, are marked reverently beneath the big pine tree. There is an old saying that fishing and hunting friends are forever friends, and mine have been far too numerous to mention without offending many; but some of the names that come to mind with deep respect and affection are Al Anslow, Charlie Connely, Bud Hellyer, Bob Firth, Blair Johnstone, Jack Fenety, Joe Cullman, Wilf Carter, Ken Bartlett (all of them now deceased), Bert Bates, Paul Briggs, Jerry Urquhart, Jim Hughson, Bill McNamara, Grant Watson, Bill and George Fraser, the Kenmore crowd, led by my brother-in-law Dr. Jack MacKay as president, and David Wilson as secretary, and of course such fellow business colleagues as Dominic Gammiero, Arunas Pleckaitis and Denis Losier to name only a few.

The most important fishing friend of all has been my wife, Peggy, who took up the sport in self-defence after we were married, having never before been exposed to forests and fish and flies, but who mastered the art of casting with a delicate touch and then hooked and released so many fish at one pool that it now bears her name. Salmon fishing has been a bond between us, helping weather all the other strains of life.

When I think of all the wonderful places I have been and the great people I have known in pursuit of the mystical lore of the Atlantic salmon, there are innumerable stories that come to mind. A clear and cool July morning at Slate Island, for example, when Peggy and I walked down to her pool below the brook and promptly hooked and released three grilse between us in less than a half hour. We thought that the main summer run had just arrived in our waters, and with the Bartletts coming to visit later that day, I decided to drive out to the top of the hill so that I could phone them with the good news and encourage their arrival as early as possible. Well, as salmon life will have it, there was not another single raise or strike for the rest of the entire weekend; so the forces of

Nature had again given us a taste of its wonders yet proved they should never be taken for granted even for a moment.

It was one of my life's more poignant moments on February 2, 2009, when I attended the funeral of that long-time fishing and hunting friend, Ken Bartlett. It was my honour at the invitation of his family to deliver the eulogy, and there is one brief excerpt from it that attempts to capture the essence of those special relationships which exist among friends who spend time in the woods and on the water together:

"We all have our own special memories of Ken, but one that comes to my mind is of him sitting at his favourite corner of the card table in the camp, a small glass of good scotch close at hand (and in earlier days his pipe as well), with his firm jaw and friendly smile set and his eyes twinkling, as he said, 'Come on gang, let's deal!' That memory is typical of so many great occasions, where the spirit of fellowship was the source of real fun and satisfaction and where the bonds of friendship were built to last."

The fickle reality of salmon angling has been experienced many times, but none more frustratingly than in September of 2009 when, in Kelly Channel and Flo's Pool near the Ledges Inn at Doaktown with three experienced fishermen covering the same water in rotation, only Bill Fraser of Antigonish was able to hook a single fish while David Wilson and I stuck out completely over the same water using similar flies during an entire morning. In fact, Bill hooked and lost or released five fish that morning, three salmon and two grilse, while David had only a couple of tugs and I had nothing at all. All the while the river was full of many large fish, breaking frequently, but in those foul moods when they were not seeming to take any fly we had to offer except for Bill Fraser who had the magic touch. How does one possibly explain the frustration of those circumstances, except to say "that's salmon fishing!"

Perhaps the most memorable salmon fishing experience of my life was on a quiet Sunday afternoon about five years ago at Slate Island, with clear and cool weather during the Thanksgiving weekend, when I

decided to pole up over Slate Island Bar to the pools above, the main one named Robertson's Pond. At the upriver entrance to that pool is a small run of water that frequently holds a fish against a far ledge, so staying in the canoe I placed myself slightly above that spot, and sat down for a moment to survey the scene. It is a pristinely private and quiet stretch of the river, with only the faint sound of the rapids below, and I sensed one of those unique moments of true peace and contentment with the world around me. The fishing had been slow that weekend, so I decided to take out a favourite fall fly, the Cardinal, which is a streamer tyed by Jack MacKay, and tightened it to my leader. Standing high in the canoe, I began to work my casts towards that far ledge, and within just a few moments had a wonderful strike, and a big salmon took my line on a long run towards Robertson's Pond. Quickly I lifted the anchor on the canoe, and carefully edged downriver to follow the fish until I finally settled near a large rock and stepped out to more firmly play it. As it was, I also had the camera around my neck, and the whole setting was so beautiful and exhilarating that I decided to try and take some pictures with one hand while holding the fish with the other. After about fifteen minutes, I was able to bring that salmon to the rock where I gently took out the Cardinal, snapped another quick picture and released the fish back into the water. By the time it was over, I had used almost the whole roll of film. Most of the one-handed photos turned out quite well, so I have a visible memory of that moment forever.

For a few minutes after watching the salmon swim slowly away, I sat in the canoe by that rock looking down towards our Slate Island Lodge which was just around the bend, and I had a profound realization of what a truly momentous and memorable experience I had just had. It struck me clearly that life could not get much better than that. With a great sense of appreciation and respect for the good fortune brought to me that day, I snipped off my Cardinal and put it in the fly box, reeled up the line fully on the reel, took my rod apart and placed it on the floor of the canoe, and declared to myself that although a few more days were left on the calendar officially, a truly wonderful season was now over for me. With that, I slowly poled down the river to our camp, climbed the

stairs and put all my gear away, then went over to my favourite spo under the birch trees to once again just watch the river run by. It was the most fitting end to a salmon day and a salmon season that I could ever imagine.

Epilogue

Sixty Seconds Run

One of the proudest moments of my career was to be appointed an Officer in the Order of Canada on November 15, 2000. The citation in the investiture program read as follows:

> *Officer of the Order of Canada – J.W. Bud Bird, O.C., LL.D.*
>
> *A politician, activist and entrepreneur, this versatile businessman is respected and admired for his counsel and dedication. As a mentor, he shares his diverse knowledge and expertise with new generations of entrepreneurs. Under his leadership, the Department of Natural Resources of New Brunswick implemented changes to the forest industry that set new standards for the rest of Canada. He continues to serve his community through his volunteer work as Chairman Emeritus of the Greater Fredericton Economic Development Corporation.*

How this wonderful appointment came to me, I do not know and can only surmise. The selection process is statutory and independent, based on confidential nomination by one's peers. Whatever the source, it is an honour I shall strive to be worthy of so long as I live.

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On March 22, 2011, I will have reached the age of seventy-nine years. For almost eleven of those years now, writing this book has been a large and enjoyable task, as I have reflected on the great gift of the life I have been given. The proverbs call for "an interesting life," and mine has certainly been blessed that way in abundance.

In our home at 7 Simcoe Court we are now entering "the golden years" as the saying goes, with both Peggy and I ever more dependent upon one another in the realities of age. There are lots of aches and pains, and occasionally a hospital visit, but we are still fortunate to travel a little, on those fishing trips of course.

My own daily schedule remains pretty routine, starting with the YMCA wellness centre around 6 a.m., after picking up *The Globe and Mail* along the way. Then to the office, where I have always loved my work. Almost more than going fishing, I look forward to what the new day may bring to my desk, and am consistently motivated by the challenges and opportunities that arise there. When 6 p.m. arrives, it is home for time together at dinner, the most pleasant and relaxing hour of them all. Then a little news or sports on TV, help with the dishes occasionally, and off to bed. The alarm is set for another early start the next morning. It is an active and enjoyable way of staying *unretired*.

We share a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in the lives of our children. Despite some setbacks from time to time, life has treated our family as well as any, and better than most. The twelve grandchildren are all rapidly advancing in age and maturity, and I know we are going to be increasingly proud of this new generation.

Quite early in my career I was introduced to a book written by the late Dr. George Frederick Clarke of Woodstock, New Brunswick entitled *Six Salmon Rivers and Another*. In his words, that other "river o contentment" is the most precious waterway of life. It has been my gooc fortune to find and travel that river often. While I know there may be difficult trials ahead, the goal of life is to journey on as long as you can as well as you can...*sixty seconds' worth of distance run*...never fully attained, but important to have tried.

There are many ways to experience the euphoria of Nature, when you feel as one with the natural world around you. It could be a cool, clear morning on the river with the mist rising above the water; or the gorgeous pink and purple sky as the sun falls over the horizon on a summer day; or the magnificent mosaic of the forest at the peak of the fall season – but for me one of the most ideal scenarios of all is to be in the woods, when the sky is blue and the sun is high, on the morning after the first snowfall of the winter. During November and December each year, I watch the weather forecast closely and try to gauge my schedule so that I can quickly break free when such a situation is likely to occur.

In late November of 2010, on a Sunday morning in fact, I awoke early to discover a fresh light snowfall on our lawn at home and a clearing moonlit sky. I decided to call the Irving Gate at Deersdale, where I have permission to pass through to Slate Island (thanks to Jim Irving's courtesy and generosity), and the gatekeeper told me they had eight inches of snow and also a clear sky. I quickly put a lunch together, bought a thermos of coffee at the service station and with my camera on the seat beside me took off alone for the white wilderness. I was not disappointed.

The whole landscape was as pure as the driven snow, interspersed only by the occasional moose or deer track, always exciting to see because you sense the animal is nearby. The quiet majesty of the new winter wonderland always brings to me a great sense of peace, and of living in the moment. It is almost as if time is standing still as I look over the hills and valleys of that Miramichi territory I have known so well for so many years. As I surveyed that scene of unbroken roads and trails the

spirit of the explorer was kindled within me, and those became hours and minutes filled with the essence of life. I was reminded of all the tracks I have followed in my lifetime, and of all the friends with whom I have shared those treks. When I returned home late that afternoon, I felt it was another special day in life, well spent.